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ABSTRACT

This curriculum handbook presents North Carolina's early childhood education program. Section I provides a holistic overview of young children's growth and development. Section II discusses key environments which affect children's learning. These include the home, school, and community. Various adult roles in the fostering of healthy developmental growth are identified, and cooperative relationships between home and school are highlighted. Section III describes the curriculum in terms of goals and activities. Facilitative strategies are contrasted with inappropriate strategies and examples from observation. Section IV focuses on planning in the child development center, and highlights the necessity of planning around observed interests and needs of children. Section V concerns the assessment of children, teachers, environments, materials, and the home-school partnership. Section VI provides a bibliography of 73 resources for adult learning and a list of 6 related programs. (RH)

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Circle of Childhood

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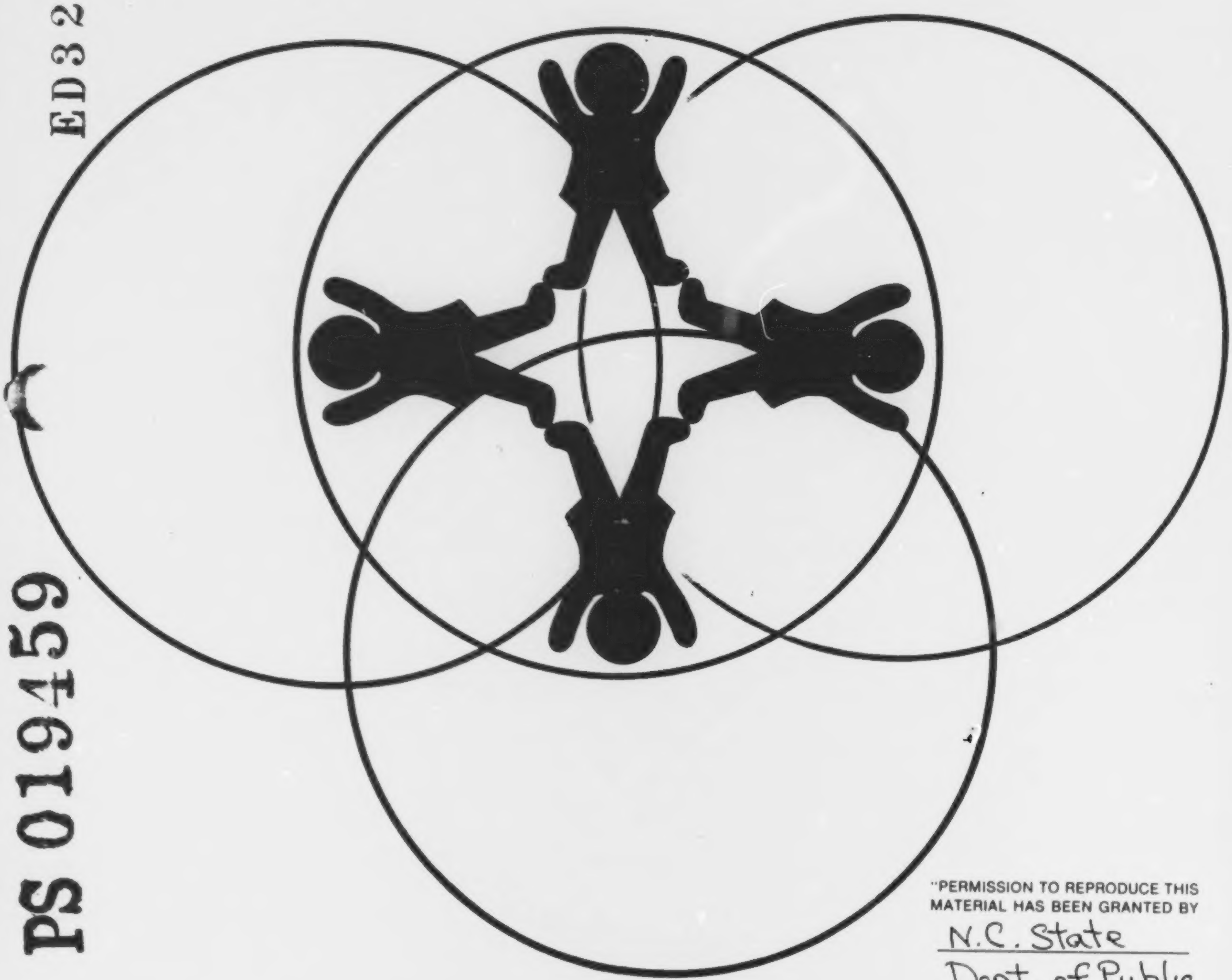

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FOREWORD

From the moment of birth the young child is ready to learn. At every moment thereafter the child is in a continual state of reaching out to make sense of the world, ready and eager to learn something/anything. How is it then that so many of our children are experiencing failure? Could it be that in our rush to standardize curriculum, to standardize testing practices, and to standardize teacher evaluation processes, we lost sight of our real mission? Have we lost sight of the children? Have we allowed a system to evolve that sends the message that children must be ready for school rather than school being ready for children? If such is the case, then it is time for a period of rethinking our mission as public educators -- for rethinking our own state of readiness for the children who cross our thresholds. The implementation of new programs for 3- and 4-year-olds provides educators across North Carolina with just such an opportunity. As we begin to develop appropriate pilot programs for 3- and 4-year-olds, it is imperative that we simultaneously analyze the appropriateness of our programs for 5-, 6-, and 7-year-old children. In fact, this period may be the perfect time to critique the developmental appropriateness of our educational programs at all levels. The crucial connections between the early years and the quality of the rest of life makes it essential that we do no less.

For it is now commonly accepted knowledge that approximately 50 percent of any human's intelligence is formulated by age four. During the period between five and eight years, another 30 percent takes place, leaving only 20 percent to be developed throughout the remainder of the lifespan. This clearly means that the early years are the most crucial years of life in terms of total development. If we are to make the most of these years, and it is imperative that we do so, then we must be ready. We must be ready to meet children where they are when they come to us. We must be ready for each individual child. This is a big order, for children come in all shapes and sizes, from all kinds of backgrounds, and with varying levels of abilities and interests. But we must be ready -- ready with developmentally appropriate programs which allow young children to make the most of those early years. However, we must not stop there. We must work on a continuation of developmentally appropriate structures and programs for our young children to move through as they grow and mature. Then, and only then can it be said that we have genuinely done everything in our power to assist all of our young children to meet their full potential.

Bob Etheridge
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

PREFACE

The historical time line of efforts to provide early childhood education in North Carolina spans a period of almost 150 years. From a sociological perspective, this time line represents one strand of efforts made by state government to anticipate and respond to the needs of society. Beginning in 1840, in response to the growing need for public education brought about by the impact of better roads and railroads, the General Assembly passed an act for the Establishment and Regulation of Common Schools. This act provided that all white children below the age of 21 be permitted to attend and receive education. In 1923, during a postwar era marked by rapid industrialization and intensive efforts to improve education, the General Assembly enacted legislation which granted voters the opportunity to levy a special tax to provide for kindergarten programs. Industry-based programs were already operating in Greensboro, Lumberton, and Wilmington. Private programs for children of parents who could afford it were beginning to spring up across the State, and a few programs existed in connection with teacher training institutions. However, several local governments (for brief periods of time) did take advantage of this new option. Then in 1945, slightly more than 10 years after the State had taken over the support of public schools and just as WWII was drawing to a close, the General Assembly reaffirmed the 1923 law and authorized the State Department of Public Instruction to supervise kindergartens.

It was almost 20 years later, during an era characterized by the trauma and the promise of enhanced human/civil rights for blacks, women, youth, and children, that once again preschool education appeared on the public school scene. Supported by federal funds for the disadvantaged, Title I and Head Start programs were initiated across the State. Then in 1969, the General Assembly passed an act to initiate pilot kindergarten programs. With the help of Title I funds, eight pilot sites were initiated. Full funding for kindergarten was provided in 1976. Implementation of the kindergarten program in North Carolina was characterized by a massive staff development effort for the new kindergarten teachers and teacher assistants, for administrators and for first-third grade teachers in the pilot projects. Training was provided for assisting educators in the implementation of child-centered programs, programs which focused on vertical or family grouping for a wide range of children, on exploration, choice, oral language development, language experience, personal responsibility and personal decision making, and on the provision of an integrated approach to learning in the various content areas. The next major step forward came when the General Assembly provided funds for the Primary Reading Program, which provided for teacher assistants and further staff development in grades 1, 2, and 3.

However, it was just following this period that North Carolina, along with every other state in the nation, began to get caught up in the backlash to the traumatic side of the '60s which appeared in the education community in the form of the "Back to the Basics" movement. New attention was given to accountability, to standardized testing, and to teacher evaluation processes. While this period was a necessary one in the whole scheme of things, it did result in a shift of focus away from the provision of developmentally appropriate programs for young children.

During this period, too, an unprecedented cultural transformation was taking place across North Carolina, as well as across the entire nation, providing the impetus and momentum for moving the State in a new direction. As a result of economic and cultural changes, large numbers of women have moved into the work force. North Carolina has the highest rate in the nation of working mothers of young children. Children have become the largest segment of the population living in poverty; divorce rates and teenage pregnancy rates have sharply escalated; the term "latchkey children" has been added to our vocabulary; and, dropout rates have risen in correspondence to increased numbers of students who are failing their grade. Crime and delinquency rates have become a national problem (North Carolina ranks first in the number of persons in prison per 100,000 population). In addition to all of this, we are met head on with the drug crisis. Our problems are mammoth, but so is our capacity for meeting challenge.

The 1980's have been a time of reflection, analysis, study, and new activity. Much attention has been given to the question: "What have we learned from our own history in early childhood efforts and from analysis of our current situation?" While opinions vary, there is a growing consensus among North Carolina educators around the following assumptions:

- The need for early education programs (3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds) is critical.
- Parents and families must not be left behind in the rush to implement programs. They must become an integral part of the total program from design to implementation and evaluation.
- Practicing teachers and parents who understand child development and developmentally appropriate practices are best able to assist in providing learning experiences for other teachers and parents.
- Adults learn best in brief, intense situations followed by time for trying out, questioning, and further learning. Staff development should be planned with this in mind.
- Abstract, standardized testing of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children is not productive for children, parents, or educators.
- Maintenance of developmentally appropriate programs is dependent upon continuous staff development, expanded involvement in decision making, increased focus on public awareness and knowledge, and continuous program evaluation and monitoring. In addition, consistency among developmentally appropriate program goals and strategies, assessment practices for children, and evaluation practices focused on evaluating teachers must be maintained.
- Longitudinal research must be built into the program.
- The program must reach beyond the walls of the school. Inter-agency networks should be strengthened. Communities should be made aware of their role, collectively and individually, in facilitating a high quality of life for young children. National and international linkages should be developed and maintained.

- Schools must respond to the changes and growing needs of the culture in considering length of school day and year, feeding programs, health services, adult literacy, teen pregnancy, and the school's function in the broader community.

As consensus emerges, it brings with it a gnawing press for action.

In 1983, a State Department of Public Instruction Study Commission was established to investigate the feasibility of providing programs for pre-kindergarten children in North Carolina. The intensive work of this task force and its subsequent report brought to the attention of the citizens of North Carolina the hard facts of our current situation. It also increased awareness of the fact that research on the societal impact of developmentally appropriate programs for young children provided the light at the end of the tunnel. As an outgrowth of increased awareness, the 1987 General Assembly appointed from its membership two early childhood committees, one to study the present kindergarten situation and another to study education prior to kindergarten. The Public School Forum of North Carolina established an Early Childhood Education Subcommittee. Early education issues are appearing everywhere as conference topics from business and industry conferences to high school drop out and drug abuse conferences. The number of Chapter I Programs for pre-kindergarten children is increasing and new, federally funded programs for preschool handicapped children are being developed.

As a result of the current momentum, North Carolina has reached the long overdue point of beginning to make plans for providing State funds for programs for children prior to kindergarten. The Pre-kindergarten Task Force for Program Development was established by the State Department of Public Instruction in February of 1988. This Task Force was charged with the task of defining and developing a plan for initiating pilot programs in the public schools. This publication represents one phase of the work of this Task Force. We hope that those who use it will find it helpful in their efforts to enhance the quality of life for the very young children of our State.

Joseph B. Webb

Joseph B. Webb

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood research during the past 20 years indicates that developmentally appropriate programs that stress child initiated learning can have a positive and long-term impact on intelligence and on the quality of life of the individual, the family, and the community. The two key terms in this research are "developmentally appropriate" and "child initiated learning." Consequently, it is necessary for these terms to be defined and clarified to the extent that a common understanding can be reached.

In July, 1985, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) issued a position statement in the book, Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Programs. This statement defined "developmentally appropriateness" in two dimensions -- age appropriateness and individual appropriateness.

1. Age appropriateness: Human development research indicates that there are universal, predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first 9 years of life. These predictable changes occur in all domains of development -- physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. Knowledge of typical development of children within the age span served by the program provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.

2. Individual appropriateness: Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. Both the curriculum and adults' interactions with children should be responsive to individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with materials, ideas, and people. These experiences should match the child's developing abilities, while also challenging the child's interest and understanding. (NAEYC, p. 5)

In establishing guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices, NAEYC identifies and addresses four central aspects of the program: the quality of the curriculum, the quality of adult/child interaction, the quality of the home/school relationship, and the quality of evaluation of children. Using the NAEYC position paper as a foundation, North Carolina educators have designed a program for implementation with 3-, 4-, and 5- year-old children based on the following assumptions:

1. Parents are the first and most important teachers of their own children and consequently have the right and the responsibility to be actively engaged in all aspects of their child's program.

2. Early childhood educators have the right and the responsibility to seek knowledge of the developmental characteristics of young children, to serve as advocates for young children, and to provide programs which are appropriate for them.

3. Communities have the right and the responsibility to support efforts on behalf of their young children and to provide a community environment which undergirds and fosters their learning and well-being.

4. Children are valued and accepted as whole and unique individuals whose developmental characteristics, interests, and needs form the hub of the program.

5. The early childhood curriculum is an outgrowth of the developmental characteristics of young children and is focused on concept development over an extended period of time.

6. Activities and materials are concrete in nature and reflect the real life of young children.

7. Learning environments are created and organized for active exploration and a high level of interaction. Attention is given to space and time.

8. Children's decision making, problem solving, and personal responsibility are integral parts of the program.

9. Assessment is carried out through adult observation and recording of children engaged in exploratory and interactive experiences.

10. Evaluation of early childhood staff is based on the criteria for developmentally appropriate programs.

The foregoing assumptions strongly suggest that certain practices are totally inappropriate and would deter a staff in their efforts to provide a developmentally appropriate early childhood program. Carefully consider the following deterrents:

- standardized testing
- large-group instruction for long periods
- activities requiring abstract thought, e.g., worksheets, workbooks
- skills in isolation, e.g., number and letter recognition, letter/sound relationship
- passive learning, e.g., long periods of listening, indiscriminate use of television

- formal instruction in reading and math
- lack of parent and community involvement
- too much concern over preparing children for "next year"

With these definitive statements in mind, it is possible to move on to the clarification of the term "child-initiated learning." Within the context of a richly provisioned environment which includes knowledgeable, caring adults, children choose from the many options which are available to them. They choose from a variety of art activities. They choose the book they want read to them. As personal choices are made, appropriate adult interaction causes children to think and respond more knowledgeably about the activities in which they are engaged. Gradually, as one day blends into the next, and one year into another, children are empowered with a high level of personal responsibility for solving their own problems, for initiating their own learning, and for reaching out to care for others in the process.

It is around these assumptions and definitions that the North Carolina Early Education Program has been designed. We share it with you now, with a sense of celebration and anticipation of what can transpire in the lives of young children, their families, and their communities as the result of all of us working together.

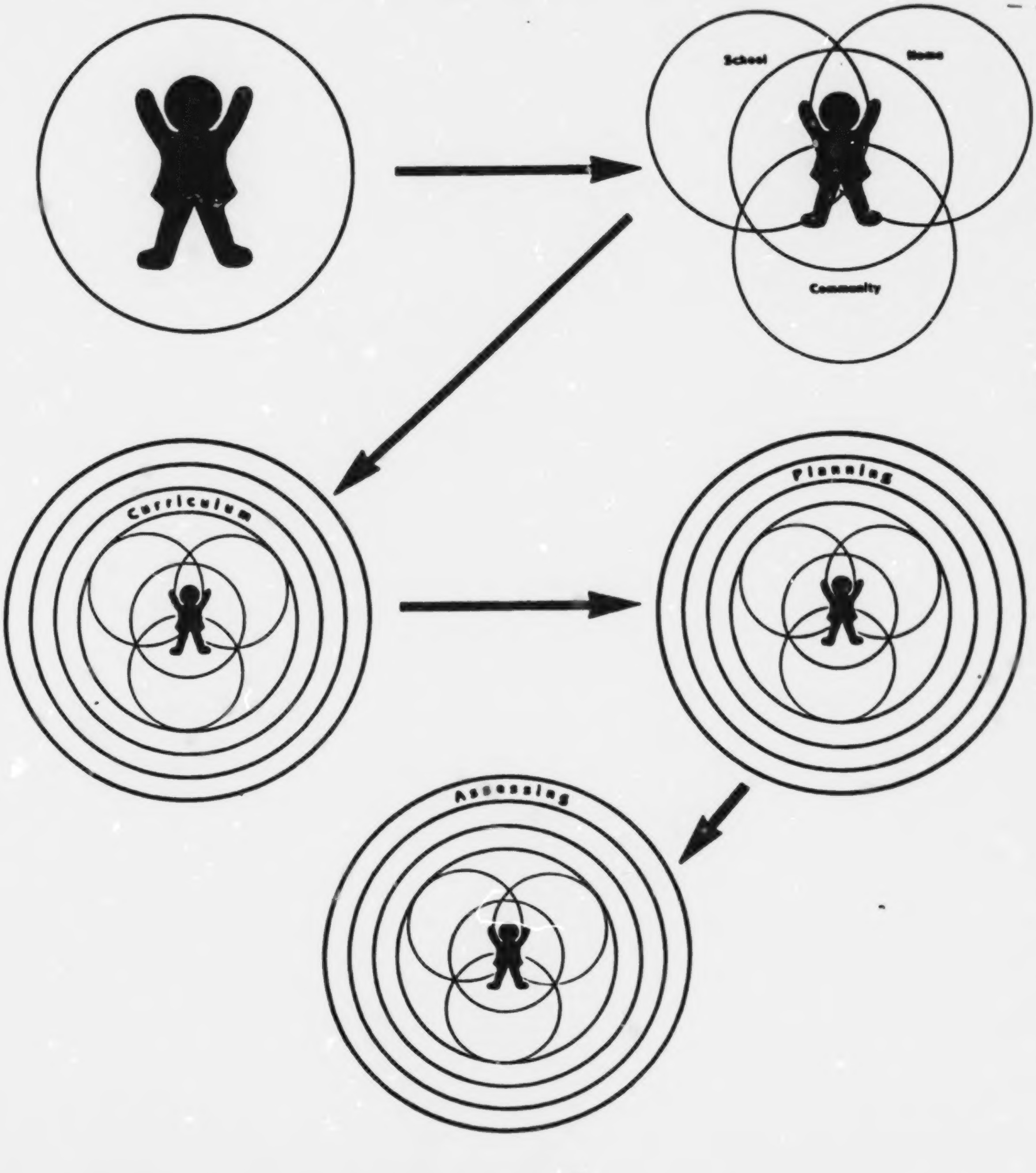
Before studying this Handbook, it is essential to understand the design around which it was developed. The flow and sequence of the Handbook was no accident, but evolved after much careful and thoughtful planning focused on young children and their learning. The Circle of Childhood begins with a look at the young child, and developmental characteristics form the foundation of all other sections. In fact, child development is the glue that holds all sections together. This Handbook consists of the following sections:

SECTION I:	DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG CHILDREN: A holistic overview of young children's growth and development is presented.
SECTION II:	THE CHILD'S WORLD: The home, the school, and the community comprise the key environments which affect children's learning. Each are discussed. Various adult roles which assist in the fostering of healthy developmental growth are also identified. Cooperative relationships between home and school are highlighted.
SECTION III:	CURRICULUM: Evolving from knowledge of children and knowledge of appropriate environments, the curriculum is presented through generic goals and integrated, exploratory activities. Each goal is described and elaborated. Facilitative strategies are contrasted with inappropriate strategies and observational examples.
SECTION IV:	PLANNING: Primarily focused on planning within the child development center, this section highlights the necessity of planning around observed interests and needs of children.

SECTION V: **ASSESSMENT:** Assessment of children, teachers, environments, materials and the home-school partnership are included. Child assessment is based on observation and recording strategies.

SECTION VI: **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Included are resources for further adult learning as well as a list of books for use with young children.

A visual representation of the evolution of The Circle of Childhood may further clarify the process and the content of this publication.


School
Home
Community
Curriculum
Planning
Assessing

I. The Child

THE CHILD

Young children are curious, active, physical human beings searching for ways to express themselves: exploring and learning from their world. When we first observe children, we are struck by their constant motion, evident in natural, whole-body play: running, climbing, jumping, swinging, leaping, riding, zooming, shouting. Next we notice a powerful need to give and receive love through warm, physical contact: touching, holding, hugging, snuggling, and kissing. If we observe more closely, we see how they try to communicate physically with themselves and others: painting, drawing, building, listening, talking, singing, dancing. Yet, another look tells us that they are incredibly curious and constantly exploring: smelling, tasting, feeling, digging, watching, pounding. Even children's imaginings take on a physical appearance: becoming, dressing-up, making faces, prancing, galloping. A full blown observation of young children over an extended period of time reveals them first and foremost as active players. In fact, children's play is the primary source of their learning. Running down an embankment, not once but many times, helps children begin to form concepts of motion, of the capacity of the human body, and even flat and inclined planes. Playing dress-up provides opportunities for learning about adult roles, body movement and parts, language, and spatial relations such as up, down, over, under, or through. Block play, sand play, water play; inside play and outside play; alone and together play; morning, noon, and nighttime play -- without a doubt, play is the world and the work of young children. Children who are deprived of meaningful play experiences are handicapped in all aspects of their development. Play provides the time, the space, the experience, and the interaction necessary for the gradual development of the whole child -- physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

This developmental process takes place in a natural sequence, though generalizations must be used cautiously since individuals grow and change at different rates. Just as all first teeth do not appear at exactly the same chronological time, neither do other developmental changes. There are perfectly normal threes who are still totally dependent upon adults, while other threes have moved toward independence, demanding to try things out for themselves. There are threes who walk up and down stairs placing both feet on each step as they go, while others have acquired the one-step/one-foot skill. For this reason, it seems futile to break developmental stages down by ages. However, there are distinct age spans which can be described broadly. Generally, 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children are:

- energetic and active. Large and small muscles are in the process of developing with large muscles preceding small muscles.

- slowing down in the rate of physical growth. Yearly increases in weight averages 4 - 5 pounds and in height approximately 3 inches. The body typically looses its round, baby look and becomes straighter and slimmer.

- still using all of their baby teeth. Mouth care habits are formed during this period and a balanced diet is also critical.

- laterally focused. Handedness has developed.
- in need of approximately 10 hours of sleep. Daytime nap needs vary from child to child, but generally, a quiet time is needed at midday.
- interested in eating. Food, especially healthy snacks, is important to the child.
- play oriented. Play is the work of young children.
- learning about cooperation and sharing. The child is beginning to learn respect for others, to value others, and to live in harmony with others.
- learning to accept personal responsibility and growing in independence and responsibility. The young child is beginning to be able to take care of self and assist in caring for the physical environment. Capacity to make decisions and to solve problems is present.
- responsive to encouragement and praise. Criticism is nonproductive.
- developing a concept of self. Early perceptions are powerful and typically will be life long.
- learning to express and represent feelings, thoughts, and experiences. Early drawings and markings move through developmental stages.
- imaginative. Inanimate objects are perceived to be alive and no separation is made between fantasy and reality. Young children possess powerful whole-brain functions.
- innately curious. Exploration using all the senses is natural.
- developing oral language. Language development and concept development are dependent upon integration of experience and language.
- unable to focus on more than one thing at a time. The inability of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds to hold the "whole" in mind while simultaneously considering its parts is a primary characteristic and is a natural pattern in their thinking.
- perception bound. Appearance fools the child.
- egocentric. Everything is perceived from a personal point of view.
- able to understand time in the present. Yesterday and tomorrow are still confusing concepts.
- whole mind/body learners. Actions and thoughts merge-each supporting development of the other.

- unable to perceive broad, hierarchical categories. Dogs have not yet become part of a classification called animals, nor oranges a part of a category called fruits; but beginning concepts of sorting and patterning are forming.

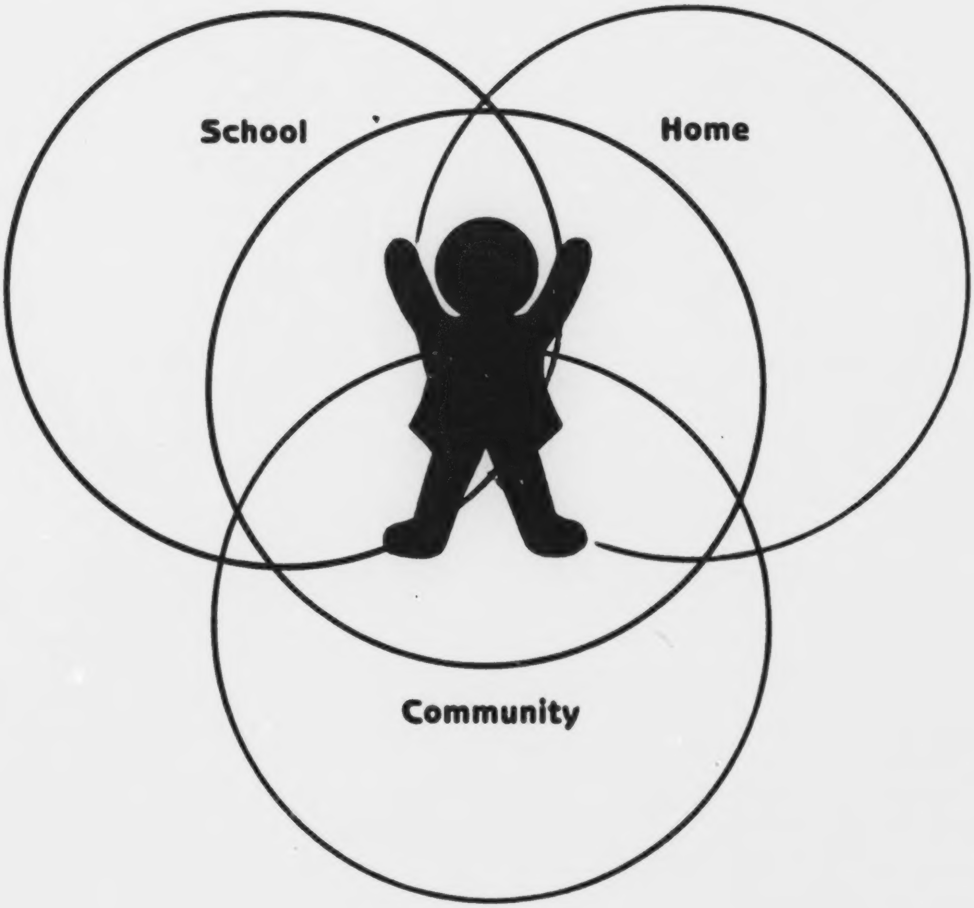
- only beginning to develop an understanding of:

  -seriation
  -conservation
  -reversibility

Children bring their past experiences with them to every new experience and use all their senses to respond to, interact with, and learn from their environment. Information from the senses connects with the child's mental images to transform, elaborate, or reduce current perceptions. It is through this internal linkage that learning takes place, and for this reason, concrete, exploratory materials and experiences are absolutely essential. Without such experiences at home and at school, the actual intellect of the young child does not have an opportunity to develop to its full potential, and social/emotional development is thwarted. When, adults in the young child's world understand and act on developmental characteristics of this age span, the child thrives and grows in near miraculous ways.

II. The Child's World

- Adults in the Child's World
- Environments
  - The Child at Home
  - The Child at School
  - The Home/School Partnership
  - The Child in the Community


School
Home
Community

ADULTS IN THE CHILD'S WORLD

The parent is the single most important teacher any child will ever have. It is in the home that the child develops the first perceptions of self as good or bad, successful or unsuccessful, in control or out of control, worthy or unworthy. Indeed, all other influences pale in comparison to the home environment provided by the parent. The school environment and the adults who create it, provide the second most powerful influence on the child's learning. This knowledge, although sometimes frightening, serves as one of the greatest sources of challenge and fulfillment that any adult is ever offered. Those who are entrusted with the care and education of children are assisted by a careful analysis of the various roles of parent/teacher. No attempt will be made to describe a "perfect parent" or a "perfect teacher" for the role is elusive and full of complexities. There are several responsibilities which apply, however, to all adults -- parents, teachers, and paraprofessionals who live and work with young children.

There is little question that the most important role of any adult who is responsible for children is that of nurturer. The nurturing adult is caring, encouraging, guiding, loving, accepting, empathetic, touching, and one who truly enjoys children. The nurturer and the child are so closely bonded that clues for helping the child grow from dependence to independence are easily perceived by the adult.

Being an effective human model for children is an important responsibility of the adult. By personally striving toward openness, active learning, purposeful listening, acceptance of personal responsibility, an open-ended approach to problem solving, and an understanding and acceptance of others, the adult increases the likelihood of having a positive influence on the lives of children.

The adult is responsible for arranging the environment in a pleasing and stimulating way to meet the needs and interests of each child. Space is utilized to promote easy and convenient movement within the environment. Materials are purposeful, organized, and accessible to children. It is imperative that the adult possess knowledge of appropriate learning materials and use these effectively with children. Parents who need assistance or who have questions should always feel free to seek advice from professionals at school. The teacher, on the other hand, must be ready and willing to share this knowledge with parents. Materials fall into two broad categories: open materials such as blocks or buttons which can be used in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes; and closed materials such as puzzles, or matching games which have a specific purpose and are used in a specific way. Both types are necessary and the child's choice from a balanced variety is also essential.

The adult facilitates active exploration and learning. This includes assisting and interacting with children as they experiment, construct, observe, share, or seek answers to questions. The adult who is aware of skill or concept needs is sensitive to situations where dialogue can be incorporated most effectively. Being skilled in asking appropriate and leading questions and knowing when to intervene with questions and discussion allows the adult to promote and assess children's learning.

The purpose of assessment is to help the child continue learning. Progress made in total development -- emotional, social, cognitive, and physical must be observed and noted in order that appropriate activities can be provided. Observation occurs continually in the home and in the classroom, enabling the adult to be responsive to the child's interests and to provide for relevant learning experiences. Observations by the parent and by the teacher must be recorded and shared if the needs of the child are to be met.

Recording children's activities and behaviors provides an on-going account of the child's growth and allows for immediate, responsive planning. There is no standard form of daily/weekly record keeping since what works for one person may not be practical to another. Each adult should develop a method which is personally satisfactory; however, recordings must represent exactly what was observed -- what the child actually does or says.

Finally, adults are responsible for the quality of their own learning. Adults who are interested in learning and who pursue learning opportunities are happier, healthier human beings and have a broader perspective to share with young children. One of the primary influences on children's interest in learning is the attitude toward learning of adults in the child's world. Since learning opportunities are available in abundance from the natural environment, from community school activities, from community colleges, from universities, from other people, or from books, all adults can take advantage of some avenue for expanding their own knowledge, skills, and thoughts.

ENVIRONMENTS

The child is born into a world of wonder. Even as infants, children begin to explore that world as they move their eyes, their limbs, and respond to adult voices around them. They find the adult's effort to understand these explorations to be both warm and rewarding. All too soon for a loving adult, the babe moves to the toddling stage and quickly into an active, energetic, and independent explorer. As adults react naturally to this youthful curiosity, the young child's innate need to know is encouraged. Putting away groceries becomes a stimulating intellectual activity. Fresh vegetables, milk, juice, cheese, and such go into the refrigerator. Canned and dry goods are stored on shelves in the pantry; frozen foods belong in the freezer. Invitations to help mix, stir, mash, pour, and slice enhance early observation and awareness of change.

Exposure to new concepts is never ending. For instance, in preparing the table for a meal, nurturing adults talk out loud as they involve the young child in the activity. "We'll need four chairs, four plates, four forks, four knives, four spoons, four napkins." There are no adult expectations for complete understanding, just the expectation that children feel the exhilaration of experiencing -- the foundation of knowledge.

It is in the home that children begin to evolve as individuals who are worthy and an important part of the family. Through comfortable dialogue, they learn that their ideas are honored and that their physical feelings and emotions are appropriately considered. They talk, they listen, they sing, they play. They share in the work and relish leisure time activities. From family adults they sense the importance of making decisions -- foods to eat, clothes to wear, places to go, times to work and play, times to rest. Children see adults reading. They have their own books and find much pleasure in snuggling close to Mom or Dad to hear once again that favorite story.

In addition, the home is located in a place called community. There are other families and other children. There are stores, churches, parks, ponds or lakes, woods, trees, and meadows, and they all become a contributing part of childhood. The child's world expands.

Children's unbounding curiosity is exhibited in adventuresome exploration of nature's wonders with its shapes, colors, sizes, textures, large things and small, rough things and smooth, hills and valleys; not to mention the movement of slithering snakes, the beauty of rainbows in mud puddles, the fascination of gleaming stones, and the magic of nature's sound of music.

What a wonderful discovery to find the same challenging environment in a place called school. The new adults in the child's life are warm, cheerful, caring, guiding, and loving. They invite the child to choose from a multitude of carefully structured centers -- water, blocks, sand, games, puzzles, colored building materials, books, paints, clay, stitchery, and dramatic play. This time the child chooses to join the group listening to a story. Soon it is time for tasty food, and the child welcomes the chance to share in its preparation and/or arrangement. The adult child interaction may be familiar -- "two of this, four of that" and "please help me spread the tablecloth." Of course, the cozy little quiet corner is an inviting place just to sit or to take a refreshing nap. And life at school is good, real good.

As the days, weeks, and months evolve, the school world continues to expand beyond the four walls. Outside, as well as inside, the child finds balance beams, wheel toys, safe things to climb upon, slide down, crawl through, and to run around. A garden is prepared for planting and all of nature presents an opportunity for asking question after question after question. And to these questions an adult is apt to say, "What do you think?" Trips to a nearby construction site, to the community library, or to the park broaden the child's school world and provide new experiences from which even more questions evolve.

Here is this place called school. Careful consideration is given to providing an inside and outside environment that fosters the total development of the young child -- social, emotional, physical, and intellectual.

Life in school does not take the place of home, but it is good, real good.

The Child at Home

Children live in homes: big homes and small homes, apartments and trailers, cottages and single rooms. Home is where the family is, and children are a part of families. It is impossible to overestimate the influence of the home on the child since no other environment impacts so completely. For this reason the home environment should be one in which adults:

- talk with children about everyday experiences
- listen to children and value what children have to say
- participate with children in activities
- read for their own pleasure
- read to children
- are knowledgeable about child development
- show affection for children
- provide for children's health, safety, and well being
- use everyday experiences such as cooking, playing games, taking walks, and shopping for groceries as learning opportunities for children
- use common materials such as rocks, leaves, or bottle caps to enhance children's concept development
- take an active role in the child's school
- appreciate the natural environment and share it with children
- possess a sense of self worth
- respect and value each other
- provide children with opportunities to make decisions, solve problems, and accept responsibility in age appropriate ways
- are continuous learners

Every home offers an endless variety of jobs which young children can handle. The following, while by no means an exhaustive list, is intended to provide examples of some of these jobs.

Preparing Meals and Baking

- Adding the ingredients for such things as meatloaf or tuna salad
- Shaping hamburgers, croquets, cookies or rolls
- Washing vegetables and fresh fruits
- Scraping potatoes or carrots
- Topping and tailing beans or husking corn
- Greasing cookie sheets or cake pans
- Mixing juices
- Stirring sauces or puddings
- Pouring cereal
- Kneading bread, rolling and cutting dough

Laundry

- Pouring detergent
- Handwashing small articles of clothing
- Folding towels
- Matching socks
- Sorting underwear for each family member
- Putting away

Scrubbing

- Sinks and tubs
- Hair brushes and combs
- Lower shelves of kitchen cupboards
- Windows and mirrors
- Formica table tops and counters (standing on a sturdy stool)
- Floors

Shopping

- Helping with making list
- Selecting items for own list
- Selecting family brands from low shelves
- Looking for categories: green things one time, fruits another time
- Putting away groceries

Polishing

- Furniture (Use liquid which can be poured in dish.)
- Shoes (Make sure there is newspaper under the shoes and a basin of sudsy water nearby for rapid handwashing afterward.)
- Silver (Stress "just a little", but trust.)
- Car (chrome and other low areas)

Gathering Trash

- Waste baskets from each room
- Lining up waste baskets to go out
- Picking up paper, cans, sticks in the yard

Table Setting

- Selecting placemats or tablecloth
- Creating centerpieces
- Placing silverware, plates, hot mats

The jobs which children are given should vary from day to day. Repetition is important, but no child can be expected to enjoy the monotony of performing the same task over and over, day in and day out.

The Child at School

The classroom is an environment designed for children's learning. The staff's role in designing this part of the learning environment is to select from the child's world situations that will be most stimulating. The young child will exercise responsibility and make decisions if the climate is right. Much of the learning that a teacher will wish to encourage will occur incidentally as children pursue their interests.

The underlying structure of a developmentally appropriate program rests to a great extent on the confidence the staff has in children, on the staff's preparation and presentation of concrete materials within the classroom, and on the quality of interaction which is fostered within the environment. Children are stimulated by and respond to a secure, happy atmosphere, with loving and caring adults. Staff members lead children to active participation by constantly altering and expanding the learning environment. Instead of seasonal bulletin boards from the teacher's file, the room should be filled with children's art work and natural objects of interest such as rocks and bones. The children's space should be scaled to child-size so that objects, displays, and windows are in the child's line of vision.

To design the appropriate setting, the staff must be guided by principles of child development. What children learn is less important than how it is learned -- a factor that emphasizes the role of the staff as facilitators of learning. The proper climate must center around activities and areas that allow the children to try, test, and discover for themselves. In essence, the environment must evolve from the staff's knowledge of how children learn -- at individual paces, through different media, with emphasis on kinesthetics, by discovery. Each child brings to any experience a unique background and history. This knowledge must be the guiding principle for the teacher and teacher assistants.

Providing a wealth of materials for imaginative exploration is the first factor in creating a stimulating environment. Allowing each area or activity to expand dimensionally and naturally as children engage in discovery is a second critical factor. Granting children autonomy as learners so that they can actively "do" is a third environmental determinant. These three components will lead the preschool staff to the creation of an exciting and motivating setting for young children.

There are criteria for the total environment which should be followed as a sound basis for the early childhood program. Consideration should be given to the indoor learning environment, to health and safety standards, to room arrangement, to the outside learning environment and to learning centers' materials and equipment.

The Learning Environment: Inside

- An area of 1200 to 1500 square feet or approximately 75 square feet per child

- Windows low enough to allow the children to see outside and plentiful enough to give the sense of being outside

- Easy access to the outdoor areas
- Good quality carpet covering for about one-half of the room, with the remaining area covered with tile, vinyl, etc.
- Sink units (a double unit if possible) with warm and cold water
- Appropriate size toilet/sink/countertop unit accessible to the classroom area
- Acoustically treated ceilings
- Attractive and sturdily built furniture of suitable height for children's use
- A minimum of 20 feet of child-level countertop space
- Storage units: free standing and mobile
- Safety-covered electrical outlets every 8 - 10 feet
- A place to hang coats and extra clothing
- Cubicles or "cubbyholes" for each child
- Display areas for children's work
- Cushions, comfortable chairs or a sofa

Health and Safety Standards

- Children must be appropriately supervised at all times, with particular care being provided at arrival and departure times.
- All furniture, equipment, and learning materials, indoors and outdoors, must be free of rust, splinters, cracks, etc., and be in good general repair at all times.
- Each classroom must be vacuumed daily, dusted weekly, and thoroughly cleaned quarterly. All bathrooms must be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- A direct source of fresh air must be available.
- Heating and air conditioning must be even and easily controlled.
- A sick room must be provided for temporary use by children who become ill at school.
- No child should be brought to school who has a fever or contagious disease.

- First aid supplies must be easily accessible.

- Napping mats must be clean and in good repair.

- Fire drills must be conducted according to North Carolina Fire Safety Guidelines and all adults must be knowledgeable of location and use of fire extinguishers.

- Children and adults should continually check the indoor and outdoor areas for safety and health hazards.

- Safe entry and exit patterns must be established and utilized.

- Health records must comply with North Carolina standards for kindergartens.

- Emergency referral procedures and information should be kept in the classroom and must be available prior to a child's enrollment.

- General health practices such as washing hands after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food, covering mouth when coughing or sneezing should be practiced by adults and children.

The development and arrangement of the learning environment will depend on the teacher's ingenuity in allowing the environment to evolve and change according to the interests and activities of the children.

The floor plan on the next page indicates how one classroom was developed by one teacher, and the notes following the plan are included only as references.

Room-Arrangement

This room arrangement is one devised by a teacher for 16 children, ages 3 through 5. The room enables the children to move about easily and allows for easy access of materials. The children group and regroup themselves and the teacher may work with the total group, with small groups, or with individuals as needs dictate. This is a flexible arrangement that will change as the children work in the areas and the need for change is seen.

1. Work top with storage and sink unit: This unit offers storage for the great variety of art materials that are used by the children and therefore must be within their reach. Also, the work surface (formica or similar) adds to the dimensions of the art area.

   Some cupboard space for cooking utensils is provided. The double sink unit at a right angle to the wall is used from either side.

2. A stove and refrigerator are necessary in any room where young children learn through the integration of varied activities.

3. The tables are versatile and easy to clean.

4. One or two art easels are provided. The tables (3) are also used for art work. A portion (4a) of the wall has a chalking surface and may also be used as a support for art surfaces.

5. The workbench is used in the room and outside on the covered patio. The tool rack is a framed peg board attached to the back of the shelf unit in the home center. The tools hang on pegs, with the outlines of the tools indicating where they should be placed.

6. The home center is placed to provide a feeling of seclusion for the children. The furnishings are modules, the purpose being determined by the children. The area becomes a hospital, an airplane, etc., depending on the basis for the play. Dress-up clothes add to the activity. A collection of fabric pieces which can be used for any kind of make-believe encourages creativity. A child-sized cot is a useful addition.

7. Two units of 12" x 12" cubbyholes provide a place which children identify as their own.

8. A cozy area for individual or group use provides a good selection of pictures, storybooks, poetry, and reference books. Plentiful display and storage spaces are available. Floor cushions and draperies of various color and texture add to the attractiveness of this area. A rocking chair or sofa, a small table, and lighting add a further dimension. The phonograph, headphones, etc., may be used here.

9. Exploratory materials such as balance scales, timers, tockers, colored snap-blocks, measuring materials, containers, games, etc., are stored here. While it is convenient and necessary to identify storage space for certain materials and activities, their use will not be restricted to one area. Some consumable goods -- paper, markers, and crayons -- may be stored here (9a) where they can be reached easily by children. A secluded work area (9b) is provided for the children.

10. Materials for stitchery and weaving are stored and used here.

11. A large area developed for unit block constructions, which do not always have to be dismantled at the end of the day, is provided here. A raised area -- a 12" high carpeted step -- offers variation of surface.

12. This area provides materials and instruments for exploration of sounds, e.g., triangles, chime bells, cans, oatmeal boxes.

13. An enclosed closet is provided for children to hang coats.

14. Sand and water are among the most important materials for children to use. The sand table with a built in storage space is mobile and sometimes is used on the patio. The additional provision of a sand pile outside is ideal. A clear water tub/table and a plentiful supply of utensils and tools for both sand and water is part of the arrangement.

15. Shelf units used in various areas in the room are mobile and vary in height. Several are low enough to provide display and work areas for the sciences and also are used for other displays.

16. Bulletin boards are affixed to the wall and are fairly low, at a reasonable height for children to touch and see them easily. Some boards are fixed to the back of shelf units, providing additional display areas.

17. This area provides a climbing structure, push/pull toys, and other equipment for large motor development.

The Learning Environment: Outside

The out-of-doors is second nature to young children. They like the feel of sun on their shoulders, the wind in their faces, and the restful serenity of a shade tree. For this reason, the area should be an integral part of the learning experience. It is here that much large muscle development occurs and children find out about their bodies in space. But it is here, too, that children explore the natural environment, experience the thrill of growing things, and are constantly developing language and social skills.

The outside area should provide many experiences and opportunities for children. The plan on the next page includes provisions for the following:

- 5,000 square feet of enclosed play space for every thirty-two children which is separate from play area for older children

- Structures for climbing and swinging
- Places to sit
- Large open areas for running and organized games
- Sandbox designed for sitting, with a cover when not in use
- A variety of earth forms: hills and flat spaces
- A variety of niches: sand, grass, shade, and sun
- Places for water play
- Places for growing living things: plants and animals
- Weatherproof electrical outlets
- Covered area with work spaces
- Paved area for push toys, riding toys, blocks, and workbench
- Readily accessible storage areas for equipment

Much thought and care should be given to the safety of children outside. Play spaces should be well protected from traffic or other possible dangers.

Learning Centers, Materials, and Equipment

Numerous and varied play experiences, both indoors and outdoors, are necessary for young children. As a supportive participant, it is the teacher's primary responsibility to facilitate young children's play experiences. The teacher provides a well developed "home-away-from-home" environment which offers numerous play/learning opportunities in well-furbished learning centers. The adult or teacher then responds to young children's initiations in play by expanding the scope of play while allowing the child to take the lead. In this way, the teacher capitalizes on opportunities to help the child advance in all areas of development and learning.

Learning centers provide interrelated experiences that are adapted to the child's interests, development, and background. Through such experiences which are planned or provided for by supportive adults, the child grows in appreciation of the world, relationships, and roles. In such centers children can manipulate objects, build, engage in conversation, "become" and can learn at their own level. Opportunities for developing physical and social skills as well as cognitive processes are available.

Realizing that 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children are action oriented, a wide variety of activities should be available as the children will move from one center to another. Opportunities for exploring, discovering, comparing, classifying, questioning, problem solving, manipulating, and creating should be provided.

The selection of materials and equipment must be accomplished through an awareness of the developmental characteristics of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children. Materials and equipment then must be developmentally appropriate: simple, manipulative, imaginative, play and action oriented, and home-like or familiar.

Interest or learning centers which the teacher should make available include:

- Cooking
- Dramatic Play
- Blocks
- Art
- Manipulatives
- Sand and Water
- Woodworking/Carpentry
- Books and Listening
- Music and Movement
- Explorations
- Motor Development
- Stitchery/Weaving
- Topical Center, e.g., shoes, soft things, pumpkins

Cooking (Breakfast, snacks, lunch -- an integral part of the whole day)

Purpose: Depending on the work schedule of parents, some children will probably arrive at 7:00 a.m. while the last ones may arrive at 8:30 a.m.

Imagine the child's day beginning with a warm personal welcome, a putting away of wraps, and an invitation to help with breakfast. Let's say four children have arrived early. Each makes a choice for breakfast, so preparation has to be made for whole wheat toast and white toast, hot cereal and dry, juice and milk, bananas and raisins, as well as hard boiled eggs and poached. Shall we use the blue tablecloth or the white? Shall we have a centerpiece of flowers, or a candle? How many plates, glasses, knives, forks, spoons, napkins, bowls do we need? Who will do what? Hands are washed, aprons are donned, and breakfast begins and so does learning -- family style. Similarly, standards are developed for cleaning up and putting things away. As each group finishes with the breakfast routine, interest centers are chosen. Some decisions may be influenced by something that happened during breakfast.

In like manner, snacks and lunches can prove to be pleasant, fun, and tremendously stimulating to these young minds.

Materials/Necessities for Cooking: (In the classroom or conveniently accessible)

Refrigerator
Stove
Dishwasher
Flatware for 25 (visitors)
Serving dishes
Table cloths
Washing machine
Dryer
Electric mixer
Set of dishes for 25 (visitors)
Aprons
Hot pads
Freezer
Cloth Napkins
Real dishes

- Pots and pans
- Cooking utensils
- Pitchers
- Glasses
- Detergents
- Dish towels
- Measuring instruments
- Sifters
- Hand juicer
- Graters

Add to this list as needed.

Dramatic Play (Housekeeping, Post Office, Ice Cream Store, Restaurant, Beauty Shop, Automobile Repair Shop, Hamburger Stand, Hospital, Tailor Shop, Bakery, etc.)

Purpose: Because the family and home are the biggest part of the child's world, much time is spent imitating things seen and done there. Children enjoy becoming people they know: doing their work, expressing their feelings and using their language.

Through this acting out -- this dramatic play -- the child is able to bring together the things learned and felt about the world and self. Dramatic play helps the child come to a better understanding of what it means to work and play with others. These activities enhance the development of oral language in a natural setting. They also provide meaningful opportunities for children to engage in those very early stages of "writing" (making greeting cards or grocery lists).

Materials:
- Dolls, doll beds, doll clothes
- Play furniture such as sink, cupboard, stove, and refrigerator
- Dress-up clothes (male and female) and racks for hanging clothes
- Fabric pieces used for creating any character
- Long mirror
- Table, chairs, and normal-sized dinnerware, plates, knives, forks, cups
- Cushions, carpet, drapes
- Discarded telephone and telephone directory
- Cooking utensils and pots and pans
- Puppets
- Puppet stage/store front
- Calendar, magazines, newspapers, scratch pads, markers
- Cash register, play money
- Empty food cans and packages
- Doctor/nurse kits
- Variety of other props

Blocks

Purpose: The block corner is as popular as the dramatic play area and encourages much imagination. Block building gives the child a chance to think, to plan, and to solve problems while moving freely and working with the whole body. Building with blocks helps the child to begin to conceptualize size, shape, and balance. It helps the child to learn the purpose of numbers while sharing and talking with other children and adults. The child's language grows along with an understanding of people. For block play to allow for all of this learning, children must have space to build. The block area needs to be the largest area in the room.

Materials:
Storage units for blocks
Plentiful supply of large hollow blocks and small wooden blocks with a good variety of shapes and sizes
Set of farm animals and/or zoo animals
Small cars, trains, etc.
Sets of community people
Sets of landscape pieces
Boxes, boards, barrels, spools
Five-gallon ice cream containers, milk cartons, and other containers

Visual Arts (painting, molding, craft materials)

Purpose: Art activities, particularly easel painting and block play, are recognized as the two most popular activities in the preschool and allow children excellent mediums for expressing themselves. Through a variety of different art media, the child is able to express ideas and feelings. The child learns that each person has different ideas and ways of working. In time, small muscle ability and eye-hand coordination develop.

Materials:
Double-sided easels
Tables as work surfaces, preferably with formica tops
Large air-tight bin for potter's clay
Storage for art supplies
Collections of magazines, newspapers, wallpaper books, waste materials (beautiful junk). Storage for these items may be large, strong cartons, brightly decorated.
Clay
Crayons
Powder paint, finger paint, water colors
Glue and paste
Scissors
Brushes
Yarn
Drawing and construction paper
Marking pens and pencils
Aprons or smocks
Junk box (assortment of materials)

Manipulatives

Purpose: Manipulatives allow children to test themselves at problem solving. Match-games let them use their growing ability to see that certain things go together. Puzzles and peg boards give practice in coordinating hand-eye movements. Simple number games help the child to learn the concepts and functions of numbers.

Materials:
Puzzles, puzzle rack
Matching games
Table blocks and games
Beads
Counting objects

Playing cards
Dominoes
Dressing games
Lotto games
Peg boards and pegs
Nesting toys
Construction sets

Sand and Water

Purpose: Play experiences with water and sand are important for young children. Children need to feel that they can control and manage their world. Pouring water and shaping sand help children to develop this feeling. Since one of the major concerns with water or sand is wet clothes and spilling on the floor, aprons, preferably waterproof, should be provided along with a large plastic sheet to cover the floor. The nature of sand and water allows the child to experiment without fear of making mistakes. Also, through trial and error with appropriate accessories, the child develops math and science concepts and the language to discuss these concepts.

Materials:
Sand table -- either on floor or at suitable table-top height
Damp sand and dry sand
Different grades of sand for texture exploration
Small cars, trucks, highway signs, miniature community people, construction equipment
Utensils for use with sand and/or water
Various containers of different sizes, shapes, and materials
Water tub -- made of transparent, heavy-duty plastic
Liquid detergent for bubble making
Soap for washing
Straws
String
Large, flat trays for soap solutions
Funnels, sponges, corks
Boats, egg beaters, cups
Tempera paint or food coloring
Plastic wading pool
Coffee pot
Squirt bottles
Sand wheel

Woodworking/Carpentry

Purpose: Tools are interesting to children because they are part of the adult world. Using them helps a child feel grown-up and important. Real child-sized tools are needed because they help the child to finish the job begun. When a child uses tools, hands and eyes have to work together, muscles must be used, and problems have to be solved. In addition, mathematical concepts, observation skills, and oral language are extended.

Materials:
Tool rack - mobile, if possible; needs to be sturdy
Workbench - low, old, fairly heavy table will suffice
Vise, wrench, pliers
Saws, hammers, hand drills, screwdrivers
Sandpaper
Soft and hard woods
Nails, nuts, and bolts of various sizes
Log for hammering on and into
Paint (tempera or poster)
Paintbrushes

Books and Listening

Purpose: Children develop a love for reading through many happy experiences with people and books. They find that books give pleasure and information. They look at books, share books with others, listen to adults read books, and listen to recordings of literature and songs. They begin to tell stories, sometimes using the flannel board or puppets, sometimes dictating to the teacher. They learn to use pictures and their knowledge of language to retell a story or make up a story.

Materials:
Carpet, cushions, couch or chair
Display unit for books
Books: a good selection of picture, story and homemade books
Record player, cassette recorder
Records: classical-traditional, vocal, stories, poetry
Cassettes
Paper, pencils, crayons, felt pens, colored pencils
Catalogues
Flannel boards and flannel board stories and pieces
Pictures

Music and Movement

Purpose: Children use their bodies and voices and learn to express themselves through music. They learn to hear differences in sounds and respond with different creative movements to the variations in sounds. They listen carefully and are able to add new words to their vocabulary. They also create their own music and exercise body parts. But most of all, children just enjoy music and movement.

Materials:
Large carpeted area for relaxing or moving
Record player and records
Cassette recorder and cassettes
Rhythm instruments
Piano or autoharp
Homemade instruments -- drums, sticks, dried gourds
Guitar
Recorders or tonettes
Jump ropes and hula hoops
Parachute, scarves
Tumbling mats
Beach balls

Explorations

Purpose: The more children know and understand about their world, the more independent and confident they become. The child is always encouraged to ask questions, to look for answers and to become aware of what is going on. The explorations area with a table for display of various collections shows the child that personal interests are important to others. Caring for pets and growing plants give the child new experiences to think about and new things to try out. Interesting materials for observing, sorting, patterning, comparing, and measuring are well organized and accessible to children. Activities with these materials are focused on concept development.

Materials:
- Simple balance scale, set of weights
- Domestic scales, spring balance
- Never-ending variety of materials for use in balancing and weighing, counting, sorting, matching, e.g., beans, shells, bottle tops, buttons, rocks, washers, popsicle sticks, pine cones, ears of corn, rice
- Non-standard measuring materials, e.g., ribbon, string, popsicle sticks, large paper clips
- Measuring utensils, e.g. cups, jugs, spoons, containers
- Funnels, tubes, cans, sieves, buckets, dishes
- Colored snap-blocks
- Peg boards and pegs
- Large real clock, play clocks
- Large and small wooden beads (colored)
- Egg timers
- Colored cubes, mosaic shapes, counters, attribute pieces
- Dominoes, dice, playing cards
- Abacus, counting frames
- Number and shape puzzles, lotto games
- Real money (bills and coins)
- Felt shapes -- numbers and figures
- Magic markers, pencils, glue, scissors
- Aquarium, terrarium
- Animals - frogs, turtles, grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, guinea pigs, hamsters, and other animals from the everyday world
- Large and small magnifying glasses
- Small mirrors, flashlights, large prisms
- Magnets -- bar, cylindrical, horseshoe
- All strengths and sizes of materials for use with magnets
- Pulleys
- Old nuts and bolts, old keys
- Jars and plastic bags for collecting specimens
- Plants
- Seeds
- Gardening tools
- Simple machines
- Rocks and seashells
- Nests
- Various materials to dismantle (old toys, clocks, pencil sharpeners) and small screwdrivers
- Tables for conducting explorations
- Accessible storage units

Stitchery/Weaving

Purpose: Stitching and weaving are among the best activities for small muscle development. In addition, spatial concept development (over, under, through, in between, long, short) is a natural outgrowth. Children derive great pleasure from watching their own stitching or weaving take form and shape.

Materials:
- Collection of fabric squares
- Large needles (Plastic needles work well with burlap or other open-weave fabrics.)
- Hole punch
- Scissors
- Fabric strips
- Weaving frames (paper, wood, plastic, forked branches)
- Yarn
- Yarn cans (plastic container with plastic lid with hole for yarn to come through)

Large Muscle

Purpose: Young children grow rapidly and need large muscle activity on a daily basis. It is, therefore, imperative that provisions be made for indoor as well as outdoor activity. In addition, the time spent playing on a climbing structure provides for rapid language and concept development as well as for experiences in cooperation.

Materials/Equipment:
- Climbing structure
- Sliding structure
- Wheel toys
- Push/pull toys
- Woodworking
- Crawl through barrel
- Balance beam

Topical Center

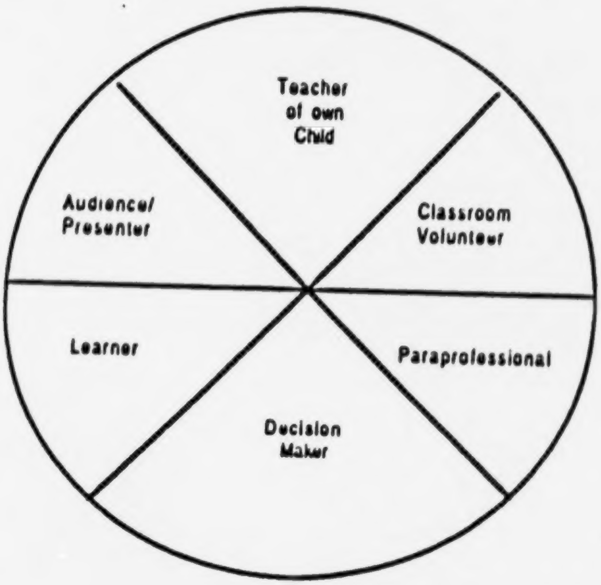
Purpose: Topical areas are spaces designated for unit or special focus activities and materials. The possibilities are limitless -- Halloween, shoes, seeds, babies, leaves, heavy things, small things, round things, red things, animals, and on and on. The topic selected sometimes is chosen because of a particular child's experience such as a trip to the beach or zoo; other times it focuses on a holiday or special event; at still other times a single concept or topic of general interest is chosen. This area is planned to include things to see and things to manipulate and explore.

Materials:
- Concrete objects
- Pictures
- Non-standard measuring materials (ribbons, popsicle sticks)
- Balance scales
- Books
- Display of children's art work related to topic
- Labels

The Home-School Partnership in Early Education Programs

Parents and teachers have one important characteristic in common. They have both chosen to make children a part of their lives. As a result, both groups devote endless time and energy to children. Both experience the joy and celebration as well as the worry and uncertainty which accompanies life with children. Both groups are dedicated to children, and both groups are responsible for children. Consequently, it is only sensible for these two groups of adults to form a close, collaborative relationship or partnership. The Home-School Partnership provides the opportunity for parents, teachers and community leaders to work together to insure the best possible lives for children. Such partnerships break down barriers and reduce the tendency for one group to blame the other when problems arise.

The Home-School Partnership component must provide opportunities for parents to play a variety of roles which enhance the education of their children and families. These roles include (1) teachers of their own children, (2) volunteers in the classroom, (3) paid paraprofessionals, (4) decision makers and policy advisors, (5) adult learners of new skills, and (6) audience or recipients of information and presenters of information. As seen in the figure below, these six roles should be viewed as equal parts of a whole; they should not be interpreted as hierarchical in terms of importance. These different roles provide parents the opportunity to choose how they wish to participate in their children's education. Some parents may prefer to be involved as decision makers through the Preschool Advisory Committee; others may choose to volunteer in the classroom. Some may teach. Some may learn. Still, others may wish to function in a combination of roles. Having some parents in each role is essential to the implementation of a sound program for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children. Through these roles, parents may increase their influence on the home, the school, and the community.



Parent Roles in Parent Education/Parent Involvement

Teacher of Own Children: Parents are the first and most effective teachers of their own children. Acceptance of this idea may require attitudinal shifts on the part of professional educators. A major program thrust should be to help parents realize this fact and to assist them in developing new and improved strategies for teaching their children. The five other parent roles also affect parents as teachers of their own children who are in the program and their older or younger children who may not be in the program. Through these roles, parents expand and share their knowledge and may develop an increased sense of self-worth and confidence in themselves.

Classroom Volunteer: Parents must be actively recruited to volunteer in their children's classrooms. When parents function in this role, it indicates to their children that what happens at school is important. It is worth parents' time and effort and therefore, worth children's time and effort. Because not all parents feel equally comfortable participating in all facets of classroom activities, there must be a variety of meaningful ways in which they may function in the classroom. These include assisting with learning activities, sharing an experience or bit of knowledge, helping out with clerical work, and/or simply observing classroom activity.

Paraprofessional: Hiring parents as paraprofessionals has three major advantages. First, when paraprofessionals who are parents work with other parents, especially when they are from the same neighborhood or community, rapport is quickly established. Second, employment of parents helps to insure the reflection of the community culture in the classroom and helps teachers and other school personnel to develop a better understanding of the children and their families. Finally, employment as a paraprofessional may be a first step for many parents on a career ladder. For example, as a first experience in working outside the home, such employment has given parents the experience and confidence to seek other employment, and thus provided substantial benefits to their families both through an increased emphasis on the importance of education and increased employment opportunities.

Decision Maker: A major way in which parents may function as decision makers is through the Preschool Advisory Committee. Composed of parents, teachers, and other community members who work with young children, this committee participates in making decisions about all aspects of the program. Training must be provided to insure that committee members develop leadership and decision-making skills. All members must be trained jointly to insure that parents are actively involved in making significant decisions regarding the operation of the program. A less formal way in which parents may function as decision makers or influence policy is by serving as advocates for their own children.

Learner: Families exist as one system within a set of systems (the neighborhood, the community, the nation); therefore, it is important to assist the parents in developing or extending those skills which enhance family life both within the family system itself and in relationship to the other systems which affect the family. This may be accomplished by providing parents with experiences within the school system which can be generalized to situations beyond the home and school. The purpose of the role of parent-as-learner is to emphasize parent self-enhancement. Personal satisfaction derived through this role helps to increase the parent's self-esteem and may result in more positive parent/child interaction. In the role of learner, the parent also serves as a role model for the child. Program staff may work with other institutions or agencies to sponsor a variety of educational opportunities for parents. These include such classes as adult literacy, parenting, interpersonal communication, and courses leading to Graduate Equivalence Degrees, and technical or college degrees.

Audience/Presenter: In the role of audience/recipients-of-information or presenters of information, parents may obtain much of the knowledge necessary to function effectively in the other five roles. In addition, they should receive important information related to many other aspects of their lives such as community resources or community activities. For instance, in receiving information about libraries, museums, crisis counseling, social service agencies, and voter registration, parents may become more informed consumers of the resources available to them, and thus increase their sense of independence. But parents also possess a wealth of information about their own children and about children in general. In addition, every parent is knowledgeable about something that is of interest to others. In a partnership, parents and teachers fit into the role of audience and presenter.

A genuine commitment to building a home-school partnership demands creativity in scheduling opportunities for parent involvement. Meetings or classes must be scheduled so that parents who work on a variety of schedules can attend. Staff must be available at a variety of times for both informal and formal meetings or conversations with parents, e.g., on-site before, during, and after program hours; in the home; at the parent's workplace. Many businesses have been willing to allow parents to hold conferences with school staff during lunch time or break time at the place of business. They should be encouraged to build in time on a weekly basis for employees to spend time at school. Communities in which business, industry, and professionals are committed to supporting the home-school partnership add greatly to the likelihood of success, and consequently, enhance the quality of life for all who live in the community.

Everyone benefits from The Home-School Partnerships. Schools more effectively meet all the needs of children and their families and at the same time benefit from the active support of parents. Parents develop a keen sense of responsibility for the school and expand their capacity to function effectively as parents and as citizens. Communities become better places for families to live and benefit from the increased involvement of members of the community. As parents, school personnel, and the community come to see that the home-school partnership is both desirable and possible, and as systematic programs are actually implemented, great strides are made toward insuring the best possible lives for families within the broad context of home, school, and community.

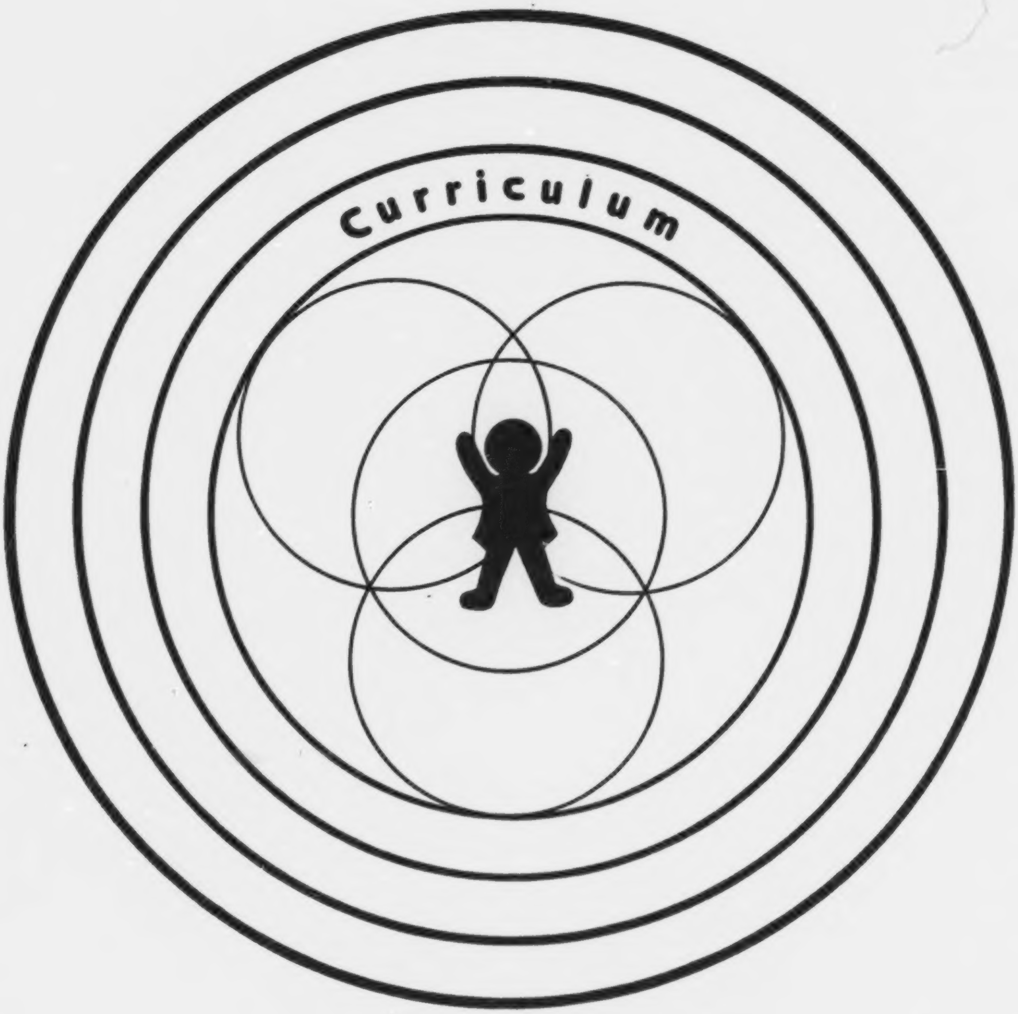
The Child in the Community

The third environment which impacts on children's learning is the community. Since communities possess the potential for having enormous influence on the quality of life of young children, every effort should be made to increase awareness of community members about elements within this environment which affect children. The community environment should be one in which:

- Children are valued
- Children are welcome
- Children are talked to and listened to
- Provisions are made for children's play and learning (parks, museums, festivals, etc.)
- Business/industry actively support schools and educational efforts on behalf of children
- Families are supported in times of crisis
- Family oriented activities are promoted
- Cultural activities for children and families are promoted
- A safe, non-threatening environment for children is provided

III. The Curriculum

- Goals
- Goal Descriptions and Activities


Curriculum

Goals

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in the following areas:

1. Self worth
2. Respect for the physical environment and others within that environment; assumption of responsibility for self and others within the immediate and personal environment
3. Capacity to use natural curiosity about the immediate and personal environment by using all the senses
4. Ability to conceptualize patterns and relationships in the immediate and personal environment
5. Ability to express and represent thoughts, feelings, and experiences in the immediate and personal environment
6. Ability to make decisions and to solve problems in the immediate and personal environment
7. Capacity to use developmentally appropriate thinking processes in relation to the immediate and personal environment
8. Capacity to use large and small muscles in the immediate and personal environment
9. Ability to live in harmony with others in the immediate and personal environment

GOAL 1

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in the area of self-worth.

Self-worth is how people view, know, and feel about themselves. It is a cognitive operation carried out in much the same way that children form concepts about the physical world. It cannot be "taught" in sessions of ten or fifteen minutes a day, but evolves as the result of positive interactions with others. How children perceive self influences all of life's encounters. If a positive self-concept is not carefully nurtured in the lives of young children by both home and school, they do not learn to value and trust their feelings, ideas, and actions. When a strong sense of self-worth is developed, the children are likely to continue these positive attitudes throughout their adult lives.

The building of positive self-concepts is multifaceted, but at this early age almost all of the facets relate to perceptions of how others feel about the child. As the child begins to discover the body -- how it moves, what its parts are, what its capacities and limits are -- a gradual sense of connectedness develops. "I have a tummy and so does Joey." "My arm bends, too." Positive feedback from adults allows the child to begin the life-long process of discovering the sense of "I-ness" as well as the sense of "we-ness". In addition to body exploration, children form concepts of self and self in relation to others as they assume various roles through dramatic play. Finding out what it feels like to be a truck driver, a waitress, or a mommy extends the child's concept of personal power -- that interior sense of being able to do or be -- and at the same time expands the concepts of other people with whom the child comes into contact. Talking with a child about dramatic play experiences enables the child to clarify and extend ideas. The everyday drama of the classroom also impacts significantly on the development of a positive self-concept. As children choose and explore materials and put them to use in ways which are appropriate for them, they experience satisfaction and accomplishment. One success leads to another. As children take the first steps in learning to share, to take turns, to try again when mistakes are made, to participate in the give and take of human relationships, their concept of self becomes that of a person who feels capable and in control of life's situations.

It is the primary role of all adults, parents, and teachers to structure a warm, secure environment that provides opportunities for children's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth and the development of individual responsibility. Adults need to provide children with personal space and time to think, time to work and interact with others, time for new thoughts and ideas to be assimilated and accommodated.

Enhancing positive self-concepts includes simple action such as giving a child a smile or a hug as well as more complex strategies such as implementing a unit on "me." Feelings of self-worth are encouraged when teachers and parents:

Things That Encourage Self-Worth

- genuinely love and enjoy children
- build on children's strengths
- encourage sharing
- value children's opinions "Children Learn To Listen By Being Listened to."
- provide opportunities for making choices
- display children's work
- choose helpers
- celebrate special events in children's lives
- provide concrete materials
- *provide developmentally appropriate experiences
- discuss interesting aspects of children's art work, language, and daily experiences
- facilitate body exploration through movement and dance
- encourage and provide for dramatic play
- view mistakes as common occurrences which offer opportunities for further exploration and insight

Feelings of self-worth are hampered when teachers and parents:

- do not enjoy being with children
- see mistakes as something requiring immediate correction (mistakes = lack of maturity
- do not find time to really listen to and talk with children
- make choices for children that they could make for themselves
- take the attitude that "it's easier to do it myself"
- provide developmentally inappropriate activities such as workbooks, coloring sheets, number, alphabet, and phonics drills
- provide negative feedback about children's efforts to express themselves, e.g., Flowers don't have red stems.

- take the attitude that, "I've got to get these children or this child ready for next year."
- suggest disappointment and/or disapproval of children's efforts through body language
- use or threaten to use corporal punishment
- show favoritism
- compare one child to another
- *use extrinsic rewards, e.g., M & M's <feeling good about what you've accomplished >

The development of positive self-concepts may be assessed through observation. Adults may observe that the child:

< Indicators to know how motivators are working. >

- smiles frequently
- explores the environment with confidence
- makes decisions
- talks with adults and peers about activities
- *tries again when mistakes are made * perdivere
- expresses and accepts affection
- works cooperatively with one or two children for short periods of time
- accepts responsibility

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GOAL 2

? homes

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will begin to value and respect the physical environment, others within that environment, and to assume personal responsibility for self and others within the environment.

Question are they really that way. We must help them

No human being is more keenly aware of the marvels of nature than young children. ? T.V & Nintendo They are first to see the hurried ant, the glow of the firefly, the secluded cricket, or the lumbering beetle. They hear the wind teasing the leaves, the voice of rushing streams, and the repeated melodies of the mocking bird. Nature is truly an inviting playground and fundamental place for learning. Children's insightful questions suggest an early awareness of form, shape, size, color, and symmetry. Alert adults seize these magic moments to honor children's astute encounter with nature and thus continue the developing appreciation of the natural world and a personal commitment to its care.

This personal commitment is easily transferred to the inside environment. A tidy room is just as pleasurable and inviting as the plush green grass along the rambling creek. Adult modeling, along with family group discussion, leads to a greater sense of everything having a place and to the development of an "I can help keep things in order" attitude. * Children begin to understand that the sand may spill, paint may drip, and the blocks may topple over, but that's okay because they can make it right again with a little help.

Children's environment is not limited to their physical surroundings but includes their peers as well as adults. * Learning to respect and value other people is an important part of the child's learning; however, adult's must remember that the young child is in the earliest of stages of the life-long process of learning to respect and value others. The child is egocentric. The self is the center of the private and personal universe, and early signs of caring for and about others are almost always linked to self. When Chris falls down and skins his knee, Carrie pats his hand, remembering how much it hurt when she skinned her knee and how her Mother patted her hand. She relates the event to herself but also patterns her own behavior after others in her world. * The adult model is crucial. When adults treat others with respect, when it is obvious to the child that the feelings of others are valued, when adults demonstrate that disagreements can be resolved peacefully, then it is possible for the young child to begin to learn about respecting and valuing others. As adult patterns are explored, it is imperative that adults, in school and at home, reinforce those behaviors which demonstrate respect and responsibility.

The development of personal responsibility and respect for others is fostered when parents and teachers:

- model appropriate behavior with peers and with children
- provide opportunities for cooperative play
- select helpers

- praise responsible actions
- nurture individual differences
- provide opportunities to care for animals and plants
- provide opportunities for exploring, interacting with, and appreciating the natural environment
- take time to integrate objects from the natural world and other items which children bring for sharing into the rest of the day
- work with children to prepare an outdoor vegetable garden and flower bed
- provide opportunities for children to help keep the outdoor environment free of litter
- organize the environment for easy selection and return of materials
- provide time for clean up activities
- provide labels for materials

The development of personal responsibility and respect for others is hampered when parents and teachers:

- model behavior which indicates that others are not valued
- do work which children themselves could do
- keep children so "busy" with tasks that natural interaction is impossible
- over-criticize and under-praise children's behavior
- do not organize the environment so that it is easy for children to use materials and put them back
- do not show appreciation for the natural environment
- expect children to work within an adult time frame

The development of personal responsibility and respect for others may be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- begins to take turns when playing with others
- displays an awareness of others' feelings
- responds to requests
- begins to show tolerance of others

- listens to others
- chooses playmates
- begins to share with others
- enjoys participation in group discussions and activities
- begins to show self-control when interacting with others
- demonstrates good health habits
- demonstrates self-help skills, e.g., taking off coat and putting it away
- helps in efforts to clean and maintain the classroom, outside environment, and the home
- brings in items of nature to share
- talks about the natural world
- enjoys and cares for plants and animals

GOAL 3

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child's natural curiosity about the immediate and personal environment will develop and expand by the use of all of the senses.

Thinking skills

Curiosity may have skinned the cat, but for young children *curiosity is the life-sustaining substance of intellectual development. Most encounters of young children are new and a first-time experience. Unlike adults, they do not feel obliged to find a right answer to be filed away. Young minds have *time just to wonder, look, listen, touch, smell, and taste. Children develop mental capacities and make sense of their environment as they lick, sniff, feel, run, laugh, paint, and hear the melodies of the world. Wonder and curiosity often lead to questions and later to discoveries: "Daddy is bigger than a brick and can float in the pond ... the brick can't." "I spilled a cup of sand and swept it up ... I spilled a cup of water, but I couldn't sweep it up." "Where does the sun go at night?" "Where does rain come from?" "I can see the sun but not the wind. Why?" "Is the wind laughing or crying?" "Do clouds taste like cotton candy?" "Why do onions make me cry?" "How does the goldfish breathe?" "Why do I have two eyes, two ears, two feet, two hands, but just one nose?" *Manifestations of curiosity are not always verbalized but quite often are observed as young children engage in self-initiated tasks. Providing adult right answers for the explorers would rob them of the joy of their own discovery. Rather, adults need to provide an environment richly provisioned with thought-provoking materials and resources. *Ample time is allowed for thought and exploration. *Above all, alongside the child, adults discover and keep alive mutual interest in the marvels and wonders of the world shared by all.

The development of natural curiosity through use of all the senses is enhanced when teachers and parents:

- recognize children's need to explore
- * provide a wide array of exploratory materials which are frequently changed use available "things"
- provide time for exploration of materials to take place
- use appropriate questioning strategies (Thinking skills)
- provide opportunities for children to explore the natural environment
- expose children to experiences and environments outside the home and school
- encourage children to talk about and pose questions about their experiences
- read to children

- accept children's discoveries even when they don't seem to be "right" in adult terms
- provide opportunities for all senses to be engaged
- recognize that children learn through play
- allow children to test limits of rules, roles, ideas, and materials

The development of natural curiosity through use of all the senses is hampered when teachers and parents:

- do not possess knowledge of the way children learn
- Not developed well if → use adult-directed, highly structured lessons for much of the day
- insist that children sit quietly, watch, or listen for extended periods of time
- direct all activity, deciding what children will do, when and how they will do it
- discourage children's questioning and talking
- "demonstrate" rather than allow children to explore and discover
- do most of the work for children, e.g., artwork, cutting
- keep children in large groups for much of the time
- neglect to provide exploratory materials
- neglect to provide time for using materials
- do not allow children to test limits of rules, roles, ideas, and materials

The development of natural curiosity through use of all the senses can be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- asks questions (But do we (adults) answer them)
- explores the natural and physical environment
- talks about experiences
- tests limits
- enjoys books
- expresses surprise, wonder, and excitement in new activities
- uses all of the senses

Goal 4

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in ability to see patterns and relationships in the personal and immediate environment.

Night turns to day. Tides come in and recede. Spring is followed by summer -- and adults understand. However, young children do not think like adults. When a 3-year-old lifts the blinds in the morning, it is quite obvious to the child that this action caused the sun to appear in the sky. Mommies were always big, and teddy bears sleep, too. Young children have not yet conceptualized the natural order of things. They have not yet learned to make logical sense of their observations, to recognize function, to sort, to pattern, to compare, or to understand numbers. The internalization of such concepts is dependent upon maturation, experience, interaction, and the child's internal mental operations which tend to balance new experiences with existing perceptions. Adults have little control over the child's mental operations and maturation; on the other hand, they have an enormous impact on experience and interaction. As Monday turns into Tuesday and February into March, day in and day out children must experience texture, color, size, taste, shape, temperature, smell, speed, time, capacity, and weight. They must pour, splash, stack, lift, mix, shift, bend, and stretch. They must experience, but they also must talk with others about their experiences. Gradually -- very gradually -- concepts begin to form. Slowly, children's perspective changes and their thinking processes develop in complexity. What was a warm, playful ball of fur becomes a doggie, and doggie becomes a different friend from kitty-cat. Eventually, they both become animals.

Children do not perceive their situation as chaotic or without order; however, to the adult mind, the child's world may seem to be one of utter chaos. Much is yet to be learned, but given the right kind of learning environment the child will come to understand that hammers go with nails, that knives, forks, and spoons go with plates and cups, that money buys things, that calves and cows have something in common with cubs and bears, that seeds turn into flowers and that flowers have roots and stems and leaves, that some ants are small next to a bee, but large next to a flea.

For young children, too, the quality of the experience is vital to the conceptualization of patterns and relationships. One-dimensional activities on flat paper are antithetical to everything that the 3-, 4-, or 5-year-old is intellectually able to handle unless that image on paper is connected to something in the real world of the child. Contrast the learning of one child who sees a picture of an apple and the child who picks up, bites into, tastes, and smells an apple, or the difference in the experience of the child who sees a picture of an elephant in a book to another who stands and gazes upward in awe of the elephant at the zoo. Suddenly, the concept of "large" takes on new meaning which can now be taken to the picture of an elephant. In much the same manner, children do not learn about "round" by watching adults point to a round circle drawn on paper. They must feel "round" in many ways: clasping a round orange, eating a round cookie, rolling their bodies into a round shape, rolling round balls of clay or catching a round beach ball. As experiences accumulate and as language is integrated into each experience, the concept of "round" begins to be internalized. Eventually, round things can be sorted from other shapes.

The development of patterns and relationships is an incredibly complex process which moves developmentally through a logical sequence. However, each concept/skill area in the sequence possesses a wide range of complexity which means that these areas * constantly overlap each other. This interrelated sequence includes:

Build on each other

- observing + language
- sorting + language
- patterning + language
- comparison leading to seriation + language
- concept of number + language
- non-standard measuring + language
- spatial relations + language

Development of each concept area is facilitated through use of the human body, the natural environment, and concrete, manipulative materials. First, children extend their capacity to make sense of their observations. They are already keen observers of the world around them. In fact, children are among the best of all observers. The infant lies in the crib and observes the multi-colored mobile. The 2-year-old sits motionless observing the path of an ant moving toward an anthill. Children observe mommies and daddies, cars moving, trees in the wind, the merry-go-round going round and round. We do not need to teach children to observe, they are already quite skilled at it. But children have neither the language nor the background experience to be skillful interpreters of what they observe. Providing these experiences and facilitating the development of language to describe them becomes one of the first challenges adults face as they work with young children. Through the provision of a rich variety of concrete materials and experiences, adults assist children to engage in multisensory explorations which lead to identification of things in their environment. Assistance is also provided in helping children to describe their observations by using such attributes as size, shape, function, color, speed, sound, or texture. The primary purpose here is for children to extend their understanding of likenesses and differences, not to recognize color names or shape names. The process is a natural one in which adults model new language rather than formally "teach" language.

As children begin to understand and talk about their observations, they gradually develop the ability to sort and classify things within their environment. Sorting is an extension of determining likenesses and differences and begins when children start grouping like things together. On a nature walk, Stephanie may collect a group of leaves, while Bradley busily gathers rocks. After many such experiences, Stephanie begins to notice that some leaves are skinny but others are not. Now she can begin to sort red blocks from yellow blocks, blonde hair from brown hair, rough objects from objects which are not rough. Initially, the child looks for and identifies objects that have a single attribute in common. All kinds of surprises are in store when children are given the freedom to identify the attribute to be sorted. Young Carrie sorted a collection of items by "things that stand up", while

Robbie sorted the same collection by "things that have bumps." Later, children will be able to group a collection of objects into subgroups, that is, red blocks are placed in one container, yellow blocks in a second container, and blue blocks in yet another. Leaves, flowers, or fabric scraps can be sorted in the same manner. A more complex stage is reached when blue blocks are sorted according to size or shape. Complexity increases further as children begin to experience and recognize broad classifications such as animals, foods, or things used in the garden.

As much as children require the actual experience of sorting things, including characteristics of people, the natural environment and objects, the sorting activity alone is not enough. Adults must assist the child in bringing language to bear on the experience. Children should be encouraged to talk about what they are doing, to describe objects in terms of characteristics, to share the thinking processes that are going on inside their heads.

As children grow in ability to sort and classify, they simultaneously begin to recognize patterns within their world. Brushing teeth before going to bed, story time after lunch, grocery shopping on Saturday are natural patterns which vary from one family to another, but for the children represent their world. Children typically begin to internalize these patterns with little more than a bit of nudging from adults. However, the extension of these early concepts is another primary task of adults. Children need to observe, experience, and talk about patterns in many different situations:

patterns

- patterns of the human body (eyes, nose, mouth make a face)
- patterns made with the body (clapping, stamping, bending, stretching, and kicking)
- patterns of daily activity (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- patterns within the natural environment (seasons, plant growth)
- patterns within the physical environment (color, size, shape)

Children learn to recognize simple patterns, describe the patterns, duplicate patterns, extend patterns, and make their own patterns. They begin with simple patterns such as stand up-sit down, stand up-sit down, red-yellow-green, red-yellow-green or red-red-yellow, red-red-yellow. Patterns made with concrete objects are simpler than color patterns and color patterns are simpler than line patterns. Consequently, 3- and 4-year-olds should be primarily involved with patterning real objects and experiences.

One variation of patterning which plays an important role in the later development of measurement and number concepts is seriation -- the sequencing of things according to a single attribute such as size, length, or weight. Developmentally 3- and 4-year-olds are not able to seriate a group of five objects from tall to short. Through their natural play experiences, however, they are able to make simple comparisons which lead to seriation. "My block's bigger than yours." "This sand pile is higher." "I can't reach the shelf because the chair's not big enough." These kinds of comments are indicators that the child is growing in the ability to make comparisons which lead to the concept of seriation. The adult needs simply to provide materials and situations which lead to comparison, to raise questions for the child to ponder, and gradually by the age of 5 or 6 the child will develop the capacity to seriate.

Seriation is the primary underpinning of the concept of number. While the adult does not wait for seriation to be fully internalized before introducing number through the informal experiences of the child, it must be clearly understood that the concept of number is not fully formed just because the child can count to three. Children's development of the concept of number is probably the least understood by adults of all mathematical concept areas, primarily because, once again, children do not think like adults. To the 3- or 4-year-old,*the process of counting three like objects is typically the process of counting one object three times. The number three is really one. It cannot be assumed that a child understands the threeness of three until:

- each object is pointed to as it is counted
- one-to-one correspondence between the number word three and a group of three objects is recognized without touch counting
- the number word "three" applies to the first and second objects as well as the third object
- 3 means more than 2 and less than 4
- 3 remains 3 whether apples, pennies, or buttons are being counted
- 3 remains 3 whether the buttons are placed together on the table, spread out on the floor, or held in a hand.

These concepts are not quickly formed and rarely develop fully until the child is 6 or 7 years old or older. The adult continuously provides experiences and interaction involving number, understanding that each experience is added to other experiences to slowly form the concepts surrounding number. Rarely do 3- and 4-year-olds possess a fully developed concept of number.

Just as the concept of seriation is basic to the various concepts of number, it is also the foundation of the concepts of*measurement. Once again, the adult does not wait for the full conceptualization of seriation to be formed before providing experiences with measure, but measuring for the 3- and 4-year-old child is quite different from many adults' concept of measuring. For young children, the important objective is concept formation. Things can be measured. They can be measured in many different ways. In order to achieve this objective, children must have many experiences with non-standard measuring materials such as string, ribbons, sand, water, blocks, bolts, nuts, bottle caps. But the human body and the natural environment are also rich in non-standard measuring opportunities. Hands, feet, fingers, rocks, branches, and shadows are not only accessible but are also very close to the child's inner being. Non-standard measuring materials and experiences are necessary for concept development in the following areas:

Measurement Experiences

- length (string, ribbons, paper clips, clay, growth charts, woodworking tools and materials, weaving and stitching materials, plants)
- weight (simple balance scales, a collection of objects of varying weights, sizes and shapes, clay, cooking utensils and supplies, growth charts, animals, sand, blocks, water)
- capacity (sand, water, collection of containers of various sizes and shapes, cooking utensils, and supplies)
- money (collection of real money, play store, restaurant, barber shop)
- time (timers, calendars, clocks)
- temperature (simple thermometers)
- area (collection of similar objects such as tiles, pennies, paper strips for covering surfaces, woodworking tools and materials, paints)

Like other exploratory materials, measurement materials must be easily accessible to children and must become a natural part of their play activities. Adults bring concept-expanding language to children as they are engaged in activities, and children are encouraged to share their discoveries with each other and with adults throughout the day.

As children observe, sort, pattern, compare, experience number and measurement, they are also engaged, through these experiences, in developing concepts of * space. They learn to put the blocks back into special spaces; they put multilinks together, build playhouses with boxes, mash round balls of clay into flat pancakes or roll them into snakes; they begin to judge that the distance to the outdoor sand area is not as far as to the vegetable garden. They begin to identify their own personal space and to understand that a finger can be used to shift a car within a block structure when an arm will cause the structure to collapse. As language becomes a natural part of such experiences, concepts of spatial relations are extended. Most of the materials for developing concepts of space will already be present in the environment, but adults need to check to be sure that there are plenty of things:

- to take apart and put together boys & girls need to do this. (train track, snap beads, blocks, boxes, jars and lids, pans with lids, things with snaps and fasteners)
- for shaping/placing and reshaping/replacing (clay, silverware, blocks, cars, trucks, people, sand, material scraps and other art materials)
- for judging distance (animal movement, plant growth, things that roll from point to point, things that children move, things that drip)

- for exploring body in space (mirrors, cameras, butcher paper for body portraits, dolls, puppets, movement experiences, body part activities)

- to be put back where they belong (clearly designated areas or centers, picture labels, planning boards)

The * development of concepts of patterns and relationships provides a way for young children to order their own world and gives them a sense of internal security about the orderly nature of the world in which they live. Night turns to day. Tides come in and recede. Spring is followed by summer -- and gradually children, too, understand.

Children's conceptualization of patterns and relationships is fostered when parents and teachers:

Indicators

- provide a vast array of materials

- encourage children to see patterns and relationships in nature

- provide time to explore materials and to experience the natural world

- provide opportunities for children to see likenesses and differences

- encourage children to talk about experiences

- ask probing questions

- ask many "what if" and "what do you think" type questions, e.g., "The sun is not out today. What do you think happened to it?"

- talk with children about patterns and relationships that occur as a result of their actions, e.g., eating a cookie, clapping, riding a tricycle

- involve children in shopping, e.g., food, toys, clothes

- involve children in putting groceries away; preparing, cooking, and presenting meals

- prepare children for what is to happen next, "As soon as you wash up, we'll start breakfast."

- make appropriate challenges, e.g., "Can you bring 2 flowers for this vase?" "Is John Henry David taller than you?" "Which of these two trees has the most leaves?" "Can you find a box big enough to put the ball in?"

- celebrate each accomplishment no matter how small

Children's conceptualization of patterns and relationships is hampered when parents and teachers:

- expect children to think like adults
- always provide right answers to children's questions robbing them of the joy of their own discovery
- send the message that the child is too young to do a particular thing
- fail to capitalize on magic moments for "teaching" because they do not fit with adult plans
- limit certain activities because they are too "messy"
- judge children's answers based on adult standards
- deny or delay adult attention when it is needed, e.g., "I can't talk to you now."
- compare one child's efforts to another
- use words or body language suggesting disappointment or disapproval

The development of concepts of patterns and relationships can be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

Indicators

- begins to make comparisons, e.g., "Look at the chocolate clouds."
- begins to draw, paint, sketch, and talk about family members, e.g., mom, dad, sister, brother, granny
- begins to verbalize own actions, e.g., "You be the mama; I'll be the baby." "Zoom. This car goes fast."
- begins to describe objects using the five senses, e.g., soft-hard, sweet-sour, big-little, rough-smooth
- begins to distinguish one animal from another, e.g., things that float/sink, loud/soft sounds
- indicates a notion as to where things belong, e.g., books, puzzles, blocks, and juice in their proper places
- responds to music with entire body, e.g., running, jumping, clapping
- makes repeated patterns with blocks or beads
- begins to see relationships between objects/things and their use, e.g., Stoves are for cooking. Roads are for cars and trucks.
- begins to verbalize transformation of some things, e.g., Cold water makes ice. Popcorn turns from brown to white and gets bigger. Water makes sand stick together.

GOAL 5

Needs to be expanded & developed
so that it is involved w/ symbolic
(Emergent Literacy)

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, they will develop and expand in the ability to express and represent thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their personal and immediate environment.

Self-expression, inborn in all children, is critical to their growth and development and permeates all facets of their lives. Self-expression is giving vent, in constructive forms, to feelings, thoughts, and experiences of an individual at his/her level of development. What matters is the mode of expressing not the content. For 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds technical perfection is not the goal and in reality bears little relationship to real expressive needs. A 3-year-old child's chanting, scribbling, or random movement is a truer representation of self-expression and a higher form of art than a product prescribed by an adult or copies from a peer.

Through the expression of their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences, young children gain a sense of satisfaction and at the same time reveal clues to their thinking, knowledge, and feelings about their experiences. These revelations are not all inclusive but when coupled with observations in other situations, thought patterns can be observed which provide the adult with information for extending thinking. Children who express themselves according to their own level of development are encouraged in independent thinking and gain confidence in expressing personal thoughts and ideas.

Children express and represent themselves in individual ways, using three various modes that will be discussed more fully in the following sections of this Handbook. These sections are Oral Language Development, Artistic Expression, and finally, Symbolic Representation.

ORAL LANGUAGE

Importance of Language

Infants cry, coo, and babble. Adults respond in appropriate ways (often reflecting the baby's sounds). Thus begins communication and the activation of thought processes. Verbal exchanges between adult and child are frequent and are reinforced during diaper changes, soothing baths, nursing time, and warm hugs and kisses. The innate desire to communicate is strong. Attention is gained, needs are met, and so very soon, much to the delight of adults, real words emerge and cognitive development is well underway. The richer the experiences, the richer the oral language. Ideas about objects, events, and relationships begin to form. The family pet is a cat. All four legged creatures are cats, reasons the child. This assumption is challenged when the child sees something called a dog, pig, or goat. Time, experience, and dialogue help the young mind sort out and conclude that these things are alike in some ways, different in other ways, but all are animals. The actual use of language is essential to broaden thought, to think more efficiently, and to communicate internalized complex meanings. For example: "I'm going to ask Mom to help me bake some cookies for school." The child uses a few words to express a complex series of actions. Language use enhances intellectual development. Future successes depend upon the quality and quantity of oral language.

Social Language Stages

Language is an active experience; it must be used if it is to be extended and kept alive. It takes a whole lot of "slow to grow." Children must be encouraged, not rushed, at home and at school to verbally express their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and questions. Oral language satisfies some basic social needs and can be divided into the following four stages:

- In egocentric talk, or talking to self, the child talks about personal activity to self, not expecting or caring about a reply even though others might be present. A child in the block area might be overheard saying, "My lighthouse is getting taller and taller. It may fall."

- In associative talk, which still reflects egocentric thought, the child talks about a personal activity and associates the other persons present with the activity. The listeners hear and understand but respond by speaking only of themselves and their actions and thoughts. For example, three children working in the block area might say: Joe - "My tower is tall." Tisha - "My house has two windows and two doors." Diane - "I'm putting the airplane in the hangar."

- In collaborative talk involving concrete thought, the speakers share in and talk about a common activity. For example, two children working at the sand table might be heard saying: Gigi - "This road is for my car." Sue - "But my car can go on it, too."

- In collaborative talk involving abstract thought, conversations deal with explanations, motives, and reality of events. For example: Jane - "Let's fix cupcakes like we had at Lashanda's birthday party." Gerald - "We don't have any of those pans for it." (The beginnings of this socialization of thought occur between the ages of 7 and 8.) Consolidate

Structures of Language Stages

Different from the child's use of language in social situations is the structure of this language. Developmentally, the child progresses from immature speech toward mature speech -- that is, from telegraphic speech to the adult form.

- In stage one, telegraphic speech, the child uses only one to three words which represent a segment of the intended communication. For example, "Susan - hat." The listener must look beyond the words to visual messages -- facial expressions and actions -- to understand the communication. Susan's total message may be, "This is my hat. Don't you think it is pretty?"

- In stage two, structural omissions, the child uses more words but omits or substitutes parts of verbs, articles, possessives, prepositions, and pronouns; for instance, "Susan funny -- Susan hat foot -- me funny." The message may be, "Look how funny I look with my hat on my foot."

- In stage three, structural explorations, the child fails to make agreement between subject and verb ("Tray want" instead of "Tray wants") and between articles and nouns ("a trucks" or "two truck).

- In stage four, awareness of past and future tenses, the child begins to use verbs showing past and future, applying regular endings such as "ed" correctly to say "climbed." Also, the child may over generalize the endings and say "hitted" and "wanted." Awareness of standard usage of irregular verbs, however, may be present as the child says "went" and "took."

- In stage five, demonstration of relationships, the child begins to use connecting words which show relationships between statements (if, when, etc.) and words which indicate indefiniteness (maybe, could, etc.).

- In stage six, mature speech, the child uses the adult form of speech. Children may progress toward the adult form of speech without using standard English. Generally, they will use the model to which they are exposed most often.

Language which the child hears most often is reflected in each stage; consequently, the language modeled by adults at home and at school is important. But modeling and "correcting" are two different things. Modeling has a positive impact on the child's language development, while correcting is confusing to the child and often has a negative effect.

Functions of Language

As the child moves through the developmental stages of social language and language structures, the adult observer will notice growth in the various ways that language serves the child. Developmentally, the child's earliest use of language is to communicate basic needs. Gradually other functions of language develop. The child uses language:

- to direct,
- to report
- to understand self, others, and the world
- to solve problems
- to maintain relationships
- to express imaginations

Once again, this complexity of language development is largely dependent upon the kinds of interaction in which the child is engaged with others, especially adults.

Children's language needs to be observed by the parent and the teacher in order to see whether or not children's speech patterns are progressing, to see how they are thinking, and to see how they are relating to the environment -- other people, objects, and materials. To diagnose uses of language, the parent and teacher need to observe the child at intervals and in many situations in order to record interaction or lack of interaction with adults and with peers. These observations may take place as the child arrives, departs, seeks help, asks permission, responds, works and plays.

The Beginnings of Artistic Expression

Oral language is only one way in which children express themselves. The beginnings of artistic expressions open different pathways through which they naturally explore and represent themselves. This artistic expression is interwoven into all aspects of children's lives, but it is especially evident in their play. Children move, make sounds, scribble, become characters during imaginative play, or share family stories and traditions which reflect the culture of their home or immediate community. They express anything and everything that happens to be a part of their world. They have a freedom to act without having to know how or why in adult terms. Children bring their own knowledge to any expressive activity. Take an example: Susan slings the purse over her shoulder, puts on sunglasses, and says, "Let's go shopping!" -- an expression of what mamas do. The child brings prior knowledge to the creative action, carries out the action in a play situation, and further internalizes the concept of mama. Those who have studied children know that this is nature's way of helping children interpret the world and themselves in terms they can understand.

The very act of creating provides new insights and new knowledge for further action. Knowing that creativity is the rock bed of knowledge, adults will foster the notion of "doing" as a means of expanding thinking and understanding. This enactive level of learning is sensory in nature and suggests that teacher or parent provide young children with ample opportunities to use their bodies as instruments for learning. This type of sensory behavior can be seen when children use their bodies to become lumbering elephants, soaring eagles, or fanciful leprechauns. With great ease their bodies melt dramatically to the floor, empathizing with the sad plight of the melting snowman.

Psychologists tell us that children who are not free to move about and interact with their environment store up tensions and anxieties. They also tell us that when children do have an opportunity to move freely and to use movements as a means of expressing their own ideas, their personalities expand, and they become more alert mentally, more balanced emotionally. Therefore, giving children opportunities to create constantly with the knowledge they currently have is the best preparation for future creative action.

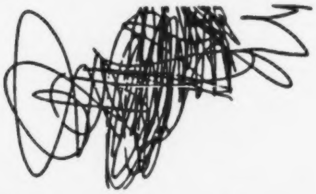
Children find free exploration with music, drama, and art a natural means of expressing feelings and thoughts. Soft, rhythmic music may entice some children to become a butterfly or a swaying limb of a willow tree. Fast, loud, up-beat music may transform the young body into a speeding race driver or a flying superman. Deep, methodical musical tones could create a youthful goblin or a fearsome ghost. In addition to responding in a physical way to music heard, children delight in creating sounds and images with their own voices, such as sirens, trains, frogs, bees, raindrops, and clocks ticking. Using their inborn sense of rhythm, they sing, chant, repeat nonsense words and invent new ones. They try out rhythmic patterns and words to make rhymes/poetry. They make sounds with their bodies: clapping, pounding, snapping and shuffling. Sticks, blocks, cans, lids, boxes, and rubber bands become their instruments. Children thrive on adding to the sounds they hear and derive great satisfaction in responding to sounds with body movement, experiencing the joy of rhythm. Music, chants, poetry, and song all contribute significantly to the basic need for self-expression in that untiring effort of children to understand their world and their place in it.

Children's experiences come from direct contact with the environment and total involvement with it. This means involvement on all levels: intellectual, physical, and intuitive. The intuitive level, which is quite developed in the 3-, 4-, or 5-year-old, is unfortunately, a level that is often neglected by parents or teachers of this age group. In very dramatic ways young children go beyond pretending and actually "become" in their minds -- snowflakes, seashells, snakes, carpenters, ship captains, pilots, teachers, mothers, and fathers. "Becoming" can only be felt in moments of spontaneity, the moment when children are free to relate and act, to involve themselves in the moving, changing world around them. Impossible to capture fully in words, these types of transformations are the wonderful by-products of children being able to focus their attention totally on their environment without the inhibitions that adults often bring to such situations. These transformations or "acts of becoming" are a part of the magical world of childhood. Thus when a child crawls under a cardboard box and plods across the yard, she/he actually "becomes" a turtle and senses the slowness of the animal. Consequently, parents and teachers should provide opportunities for children to use their voices, move their bodies, and use objects in a variety of non-structured situations to "play out" and make sense of the world around them.

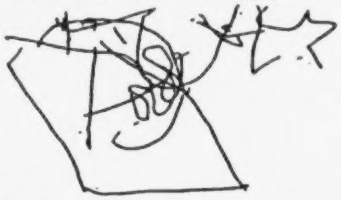
Although children express themselves vocally very early in life, their first permanent record usually takes the form of scribble. This first mark is an important step in development, for it is the beginning of expression which leads to drawing and painting and to the written word. Interestingly, crying, cooing, and babbling are considered normal developmental processes leading to verbal communication, but, unfortunately, scribbling often holds negative connotations for adults. Scribbling may suggest a waste of time or at least a lack of content. Actually the very opposite is true, for the way in which these first marks are received and the attention that is paid to them may cause a young child to develop attitudes that will remain as the child matures and interacts more directly with the environment. Celebrate these early forms of written communication and children prosper. Negate them and children develop self-doubt.

Scribbles tend to follow a fairly predictable order (Lowenfeld and Brittain, pp 123-132). They start with random marks on a paper and gradually evolve into drawings that have content recognizable to adults. Generally speaking, scribbles fall into three main categories:

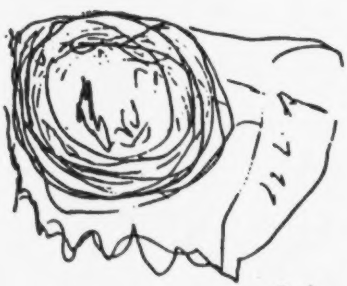
Stage One: DISORDERED SCRIBBLING. Usually random, and the child does not seem to realize that there is any personal control over these markings. They vary in length and direction, although there may be some repetition as the child swings the arm back and forth.



Stage Two: CONTROLLED SCRIBBLING. At some time a child will discover that there is a connection between motions and the marks on the paper. This may occur about six months or so after scribbling has started. This is a very important step, because now the child has discovered visual and motor control over the marks made. The child will now spend about twice as long drawing and occasionally likes to try different colors on paper.



Stage Three: THE NAMING OF SCRIBBLING. This next step is an important one in the developmental process. This naming of scribbling signifies that the child's thinking has changed. Before this stage, satisfaction was derived from the motions, but now these motions are connected to the surrounding world. Kinesthetic thinking has changed to imaginative thinking. This stage usually occurs at about the age of three and a half years.



(This drawing was named dog.)

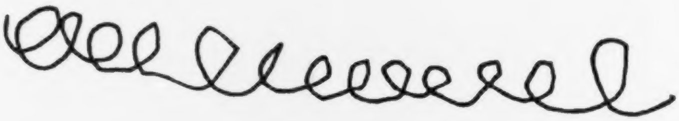
The Beginnings of Symbolic Representation

Not only do children move through stages of oral language and artistic expression, but they also progress developmentally through stages in the way they perceive writing or symbolic representation of thoughts on paper. Close observation of children's early markings reveals a striking commonality which seems to emerge from all children of all cultures. These perceptual stages are frequently identified as underlying principles of writing (Temple, pp. 27-41), but an easier way of thinking about these principles may be to think of them as children's unstated definitions of "what makes writing."

The various stages of early writing reveal once again the powerful desire of children to communicate. Learning to write is basically an act of discovery. When adults honor each little achievement made, it leads the way to new discoveries and eventually to quality forms of writing.

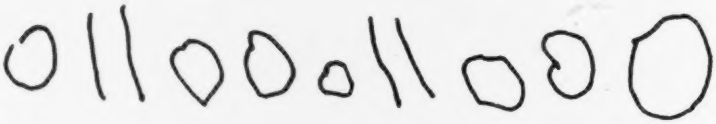
The following illustrations generally indicate the developing stages of early perceptions of writings:

Stage I (The Recurring Principle) Writing is the same mark made over and over.

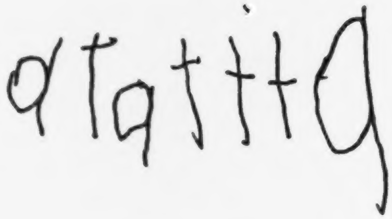


Stage II (The Generative Principle)

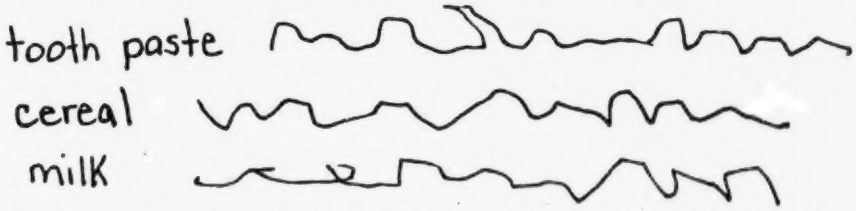
Phase A: The marks that make writing are not all the same. Some are different from others.



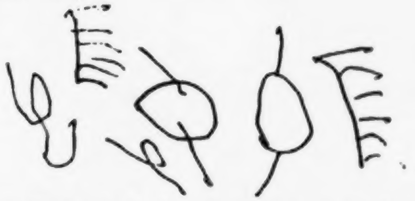
Phase B: Writing is special marks made on paper.



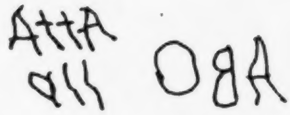
Stage III (The Sign Principle) The marks on paper stand for something, and these marks are not pictures of those things. This stage does not always follow Stage II. It frequently appears to develop with Stage II and occasionally appears in conjunction with Stage I.



Stage IV The (Flexibility Principle) If some marks (letters) are known, others can be made from them. BUT, not all marks are letters. Also, the same letter can be made in different ways.



Stage VI (The Linear Principle) Words are written on the page from left to right and from top to bottom. There is space between words.



Like all developmental stages, the stages of early writing do not take place in a linear, clear-cut fashion. Children move in and out of stages in lulls and spurts. These transformations do not take place overnight. Rather, they occur over a long stretch of time and after many, many experiences with putting marks on paper in a relatively undirected manner. The early childhood teacher provides a variety of materials for use in writing, many concrete experiences for children to "write" about, and ample opportunity for children to write. In addition, from time to time the teacher suggests that the child write about experiences. In an environment which includes lots of print, as well as adults who frequently write where children can see them, the young child slowly, easily, and confidently moves through the stages and incorporates writing as a natural part of life's activity.

It must NOT be concluded, however, that "learning to write" or to make and recognize letters is a goal of the preschool program. IT IS NOT! Observations which teachers make about children's progression through the stages of writing yield much information about children's understanding of the world, and should be used for this purpose.

The development and expansion of the ability to express and represent thoughts, feelings, and experiences is fostered when parents and teachers: -

- provide an interactive, non-threatening environment
- provide a wide array of concrete materials from which language and artistic expression develop
- introduce children to a variety of types of music
- provide age-appropriate experiences from which language and artistic expression develop
- serve as a language model for children
- read to children on a daily basis
- provide time for children to express themselves in a variety of ways
- provide a variety of materials for use in self-expression
- consciously make print visible in the classroom
- encourage exploration, experimentation, and self-discovery
- provide an environment that is visually, auditorily and tactually stimulating
- provide constant opportunities for children to converse one-on-one and in small groups
- listen to children
- provide opportunities for children to share family traditions, such as family stories and holiday celebrations
- provide an unobstructed space for movement exploration
- provide large brushes, crayons, and paper that children can easily handle
- provide good contrast colors such as water soluble markers
- provide opportunities to discuss cultural differences in a positive way
- provide and encourage opportunities for spontaneous movement
- encourage children to use their voices and bodies as instruments
- provide flexibility in activity choices to capitalize on immediate situations

The development and expansion of the ability to express and represent thoughts, feelings, and experiences is hampered when parents and teachers:

- do not listen to and talk with children
- strive for an overly quiet environment where children "speak when spoken to"
- expect children to sit for long periods of time
- over correct children's oral language
- provide artificial language activities intended to "teach" vocabulary
- neglect to provide space inside and outside for free movement
- neglect to provide a wide array of concrete materials and experiences from which language and other forms of expression emerge
- organize movement into stylized shapes and forms
- force children to imitate movement before they are ready to do so
- attempt to perfect detail in children's artistic expression
- have children perform for an audience when the performance is the end product
- compare one child's abilities with another's
- try to train a child of this age group as a professional athlete or artist
- provide coloring books or prepared ditto sheets for tracing and/or coloring
- provide models for children to copy
- introduce artistic theory: music, visual arts, dance, theatre, or traditional arts
- promote competition among children
- critique children's artistic expressions with adult standards
- place children in physically or emotionally threatening or intimidating situations
- discuss cultural differences in a negative way
- refuse to allow children to choose their own forms of artistic expression

- dictate, rather than guide, children through artistic expression activities
- force early formation or recognition of letters/numerals
- focus on correctness
- neglect to make provisions for young children to "write" on their developmental level
- avoid or neglect the use of print in the environment
- provide lined paper

How the children develop in expressing and representing thoughts and feelings about experiences can be assumed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- goes through the social language stages
  - talks about a personal, concrete activity with no expectation of response from others
  - talks about a personal, concrete activity and associates someone else present with the activity
  - shares with and talks with someone else about a common concrete activity
- develops language structures toward mature speech patterns
  - stage one, telegraphic speech
  - stage two, structural omissions
  - stage three, structural explorations
  - stage four, awareness of past and future tenses
  - stage five, demonstration of relationships
- expands functions of language
  - verbalizes basic needs
  - gives directions and persuades self and others
  - talks about self, others, personal activities, books, poetry
  - asks questions
  - solves problems verbally
  - plans with others
  - tells stories about self, activities, literature
  - uses language to maintain relationships
  - uses language imaginatively
- goes through developmental stages in art work by making
  - random scribbles
  - longitudinal and circular scribbles
  - longitudinal and circular scribbles associated with meaning
  - pictures of "floating" figures not yet oriented to "earth"
  - a base line, usually bottom of paper
  - drawings, without concern for naturalistic color
- explores a variety of art media

- uses a variety of art media for expressing and representing experiences

- uses art media to solve problems

- uses art media in nontraditional ways

- uses art media to express emotions: love, anger, fear, sense of well-being, happiness, frustration, etc.

- goes through developmental stages in perception of "writing" by making
  - the same mark over and over
  - different marks
  - what the child considers special marks
  - marks that stand for something
  - the same "letter" in different ways
  - words that stand for something
  - words on the page from left to right, top to bottom, with space between words

- explores voice and a variety of objects and instruments
  - to create sounds
  - to express and represent experiences
  - to solve problems
  - to discover new concepts
  - to express a variety of emotions

- uses objects which become people, animals, other things

- explores capabilities and limitations of own body

- uses body for
  - expressing and representing experiences
  - solving problems
  - discovering new concepts
  - expressing a variety of emotions

- uses voice, body, and a variety of objects and instruments to respond to sounds of home, people, animals, community, nature, music, poetry, stories, etc.

- engages naturally in becoming
  - other people: mother, daddy, teacher, doctor
  - animals: cat, dog, elephant, bee, turtle
  - objects: plane, car, train, tree, sea shell

GOAL 6

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in the ability to make decisions and to solve problems within the immediate and personal environment.

All too frequently, young children are heard to say: "I can't." It's too hard." "I don't know how." But, it wasn't always that way. Even from birth, the child struggles freely to understand the environment, to test, to try, to start over with a new idea. Ask any young child, "Can you fly an airplane?" "Of course," is the reply as the child zooms around with arms flapping to prove it.

To nurture and keep alive this concept of "I can," adults should consider providing an environment of expectation and personal support for the young decision maker and problem solver.

Many decisions children make, adults understand; some decisions, adults do not see the rationale behind. Harold, age 2, insists on wearing winter pajamas in the heat of summer. Jennifer chooses to play in blocks because her family is building a new house. George selects the tricycle with the trailer because his dad is a truck driver. And as is suggested in Red is Best, by Kathy Stinson, "Mama wants me to wear pink barrettes because they match my pink dress, but I want to wear my red barrettes instead; they put singing in my head." Who shall make the decisions? When children make personal decisions that do not adversely affect their health or well being, celebrate the occasion, and give them the opportunity to become decision makers and problem solvers!

In a rich learning environment, children are confronted naturally with situations that require problem solving. Susan wants to build a castle but the sand is too dry. Tommy wants a drink of water but can't reach the fountain. Ginny wants green in her painting but there is none at the easel. It is Paul's time to bring the juice for himself and three others. Mary and John have invited two friends to housekeeping for dinner, but there are only three chairs at the table. An abstract thinker looks at these interactions as insignificant, but to the 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old, these are monumental problems that challenge their intellectual capabilities. Rushing in to help might save time; however, that very act may rob the child of the opportunity to expand thinking as is illustrated in the following story.

A True Story about Nelson

On this Monday morning, Nelson, age 5, was responsible for filling the water-play tank -- capacity, 10 gallons. From among the many containers, he quickly chose a coffee can, walked to the sink nearby, returned, and poured the water into the tank. So little water. His knitted eyebrows conveyed his problem. Searching more carefully, he found a half gallon milk carton and continued his task. Observing the results of his effort -- so little water -- Nelson looked in closets and cabinets and finally

> found a two-gallon bucket with a handle. He filled this container only to find the weight was too much for him. Undaunted, Nelson went to a friend and the two soon had the water tank ready for the day. Nelson's grin of self-satisfaction was worth the fifteen-minute delay needed to prepare for water play.

Supportive adults seize those magic moments to ask appropriate questions to help children think through these problems and discover for themselves meaningful solutions.

In order to foster development and expansion of children's decision making and problem solving abilities, parents and teachers:

- recognize and accept where children are in their thinking
- provide a rich array of concrete materials, both commercial and collectible junk which are updated frequently
- provide opportunities for matching, e.g., outline different shapes of block, dishes, etc., on shelves to facilitate proper replacement
- provide opportunities for sorting, e.g., have children put the different pieces of flatware into the proper storage container/s
- recognize, individually and at sharing time, children's efforts at decision making and problem solving
- encourage children to talk about feelings when conflicts arise -- someone else has the desired tricycle; not enough blocks because another child is using them
- accept that there is often more than one right answer
- do not verbalize the rightness or wrongness of a child's response, but through questioning encourage the child to examine the response
- ask questions to refine thinking, e.g., "What can you add to the sand to make it stick together? "How many cups of juice do you think it will take for your table?" "What do you think will happen to the feather when you put it into the water tank?" "Which wheel toy do you need to move the blocks?"
- encourage children to explain to someone else how they did specific activities -- built a garage, combined certain colors in a painting, planted a seed
- encourage children to try again when they make a mistake

Children's development in decision making and problem solving is hampered when parents and teachers:

- expect children to think like adults

- do not provide exploratory materials and time to work with them
- do not allow the child to make decisions and choices
- overemphasize rules and regulations
- solve all problems for the child
- underemphasize the importance of interactive play
- neglect to ask questions which lead to further thinking
- criticize children's questions, answers, and solutions
- are intolerant of mistakes

The development of the ability to make decisions and to solve problems may be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- chooses games and materials with which to work
- decides to become a specific person in the home center or block area
- chooses a partner
- chooses a book to look through or to have read
- chooses art material to create something
- chooses art material to represent earlier activity in blocks, sand, waterplay, etc.
- decides what to build
- chooses between the wagon and the tricycle
- chooses between juice and milk
- collects objects from the environment to add to nature display
- uses the trial and error method
- adds water to the sand in order to mold it
- finds another chair for the person without one
- begins to sort objects according to good, bad, size, color, texture, or shape
- matches objects according to good, bad, size, color, texture, or shape

- sees which objects float, which objects sink
- returns blocks to match the ones left in storage unit or matching outline
- responds to "What do you think?" questions
- seeks help for things unable to do alone
- explains how an activity is done
- begins to work through interpersonal conflicts that arise

GOAL 7

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in the capacity to use developmentally appropriate thinking processes in relation to the immediate/personal environment.

Many people view little children as miniature adults. Although they do experience the same adult emotions -- fear, love, sadness, hope, happiness -- children are unable to think logically like adults and cannot be taught to do so. John Dewey said that, "You cannot teach children to think; you just give them something to think about."

The thinking of young children centers around self. They believe that everyone thinks just as they do and are unable to understand a different point of view. Once an adult has created a trusting relationship, young children are more likely to reveal their thoughts about any subject: "God lives up in the sky." "The clouds are crying." "The moon is the night sun." "You fry chicken eight hours." Adult explanation to clarify this thinking is inappropriate and could result in self-doubt and unwillingness to share thoughts.

Young children are bound by their own perceptions. They have a tendency to focus on one detail at a time and cannot see a series of states or transformation. When given two balls of clay of equal mass and one is rolled out like a hot dog, they conclude the hot dog now has more clay because it is longer. In perception of length, one detail overrides the original notion of same size. In other words, young minds cannot revert to the original configuration and do not see the actual transformation process. To them it is magic. And the magic of imaginative thinking is such a natural part of young living that its significance is often overlooked. Young children are whole brain thinkers.

In order to understand and express their thinking about people, animals, and objects, children actually become that person or object. This becoming involves the entire mind, body, and spirit. The young child who becomes a beaver knows a sense of beaverness that is impossible to acquire by looking at a picture of one or hearing an adult tell about beavers.

Young children expand and revise their thinking when engaged in sensory experiences involving a vast array of experiences, materials, and things coupled with appropriate language provided by supportive adults. Children question, solve problems, learn by trial and error, make decisions, create and invent new ideas/things, and use prior knowledge in new situations. They need an environment that encourages such thinking and celebrates discovery.

In order to foster development and expansion of developmentally appropriate thinking processes in children, parents and teachers:

- observe, recognize, accept, and note examples of each child's level of thinking

- provide a vast array of concrete materials -- both commercial and collectible junk

- provide a greater part of the day for exploration and use of concrete materials

- provide a variety of experiences for children

- make appropriate comments to each child about individual activities/experiences, e.g., "I like the way you used red paint in your picture." "I see you used the longest block to make your bridge."

- expect and encourage children to talk about their activities

- expect and encourage children to ask questions, to explore, to invent, to discover, to solve problems, and to use mistakes as opportunities for new learning, to use prior knowledge in new situations

- become excited about children's learning

- read books to children

- ask non-threatening questions that lead children to search through and/or test materials, to predict, hypothesize, create, modify, draw conclusions, solve problems, and justify:
  - "What do you think will happen to the rock if you put it in the water?"
  - "What do you think you can do to keep from stepping on your long dress?"
  - "Why do you think we put water on the plants in the garden?"
  - "Show me how to get into your house." (After the child has built a block structure without a door.)
  - "How do you think a beaver swims?"
  - "What do you think it would be like to live in a cloud?"
  - "What makes you think that truck is old?"
  - "What do you think you could use to make it hold together?"
  - "How do you think you could make a boat?"
  - "Why do you think red is best?"
  - "Tell how you..."
  - "Tell what you think about..."

The development of developmentally appropriate thinking processes is hampered when parents and teachers:

- view children as miniature adults who think as they do

- try to push children from one developmental stage to another

- fail to provide exploratory materials and new experiences for children to think about

- fail to provide opportunities for children to imagine, create, become other people, animals, or things, to invent and discover

- overemphasize mistakes
- fail to incorporate new language with new experience
- stress isolated skills such as rote counting, letter sounds, letter and number recognition

The development of children's thinking processes may be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- changes strategies during construction, e.g., moves two blocks closer together so that the top piece will fit, making a bridge
- asks questions to solve problems
- makes statements to announce a discovery, e.g., "I made green" when blue and yellow paint run together
- performs physical acts to solve problems, e.g., gets a chair for the extra person
- uses metaphor, e.g., looks at a cloud and says, "Look at the cotton candy."
- reveals how he or she is bound by perception, e.g., sees one detail at a time: tall people are older than short people; sorts according to one attribute
- uses materials in original, imaginative, and non-traditional ways, e.g., the mop becomes a horse, the clay becomes hamburgers
- becomes in mind, body, and spirit a particular person, object, or animal, e.g., demonstrates characteristics of a lion with graceful, powerful movement including lion sounds
- believes what is seen, even when evidence is presented to the contrary, e.g., Joey's mother appears as a Halloween witch; the children are visibly afraid. She removes the costume in the presence of the children who become calm. She puts the costume back on in the presence of the children who once again are afraid.

GOAL 8

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children, at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in the capacity to use large and small muscles in the immediate and personal environment.

Movement begins before birth and continues throughout life. For young children, movement is a huge chunk of what life is all about. They creep, crawl, toddle, walk, run, jump, hop, climb, and slide. They grasp, push, pull, twist, turn, stretch, bend, and swing. Indeed, it is almost impossible to think of children without thinking of some form of movement. The development of a young child's large and small muscles, or motor systems, is a primary goal of the early years. Parents and teachers must make careful provision to see that this goal is achieved. Space, time, and equipment/material must be considered in planning for motor development. There must be indoor and outdoor space for vigorous activity, and this space must be provisioned with equipment and materials which promote muscle development. For large motor development, consideration should be given to:

- steps for climbing
- balance beams
- climbing structures
- wheel toys
- barrels for climbing through and rolling over
- push and pull toys
- large, hollow blocks
- large balls
- seesaws
- slides
- woodworking bench and real tools

For small muscle development, consideration should be given to:

- wooden puzzles
- table top construction materials (building blocks, snapping blocks, etc.)
- stitchery materials
- stringing beads
- clay and other modeling material

- food preparation which requires stirring, mashing, squeezing, kneading, pounding
- painting, drawing
- woodworking
- peg boards
- sand and water with accessories
- materials for cutting and pasting

Space and equipment/materials are essential to motor development, but without time for use, they have absolutely no value. Even though time is a necessary ingredient, the utilization of time may be even more important. Ideally, the indoor and outdoor play spaces are open to children throughout the day, making it possible for children to move in and out, setting their own patterns and taking care of their own needs. For this reason, immediate access to the outdoors is necessary.

The outside play area is an extension of the inside learning environment and is important in fostering creative skills as well as for motor development. As such, the outdoor materials and equipment must encourage children to exercise not only their bodies but also their imaginations. Jungle gyms can become tiger cages and sandboxes are magically transformed into beaches or deserts. Broom sticks become horses with flying manes. All of these imaginative activities can flourish outdoors and help children to create different characters and situations. Such events give meaning to children's past experiences, provide opportunities for children to articulate their feelings and thoughts, and help give meaning and form to otherwise vague ideas. In the same manner, the inside learning environment must also provide for large and small muscle development as well as for social, emotional, and intellectual development. Motor development cannot grind to a halt just because it's raining or snowing outside. In addition, physical apparatus is often needed for extending classroom experiences. For instance, after hearing "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," several children may choose to enact the story. A climbing structure is transformed into a bridge for the frolicking goats to pass over and also provides a hiding place for the troll. Therefore, play equipment is essential for the indoor as well as the outdoor environment. When such environments are created, children who come to any learning situation as whole beings are never led to believe that the inside is for thinking and the outside for playing.

The development of large and small muscles is fostered when parents and teachers:

- provide indoor and outdoor space for play activity
- provide appropriate equipment/materials for play activity
- provide an open time frame for children to use equipment/materials throughout the day

- encourage creative use of equipment and materials
- follow good safety practices and help children learn to use equipment safely

The development of large and small muscles is hampered when parents and teachers:

- do not provide adequate materials/equipment
- allow too much time to be consumed by television viewing
- do not play with children
- do not value children's play
- are overly protective
- provide coloring books, workbooks, worksheets, and lined paper

Motor development can be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- uses a variety of materials and equipment
- uses a variety of whole body movements in dancing, playing, becoming animals, people, and things
- uses head, hands, arms, legs, feet, and fingers while working with materials, while dancing, playing, and becoming animals, people, and things
- moves in many different directions
- tries out new movements
- uses small muscles in painting, drawing, putting puzzles together, putting pegs into boards, manipulating clay, woodworking, etc.

GOAL 9

When a developmentally appropriate environment is provided for young children at home and at school, each child will develop and expand in ability to live in harmony with others in the immediate and personal environment.

The ability to respect, value, and get along with others needs to be cultivated in this society. Even though young children cannot comprehend the complexities of living in a world with diverse populations and needs, they can begin to understand how their friends are similar and different from themselves. Also, young children can begin to see that there are different ways to interact with others. But learning to use a variety of methods to work out a conflict situation is a long process. Using the body is the first and most natural way for the egocentric child to get what is wanted. Some children learn quickly that a hurtful gesture brings swift desired results. Just having children "share" and say "I'm sorry" does not help them understand the meaning of those words and actions. They need to be involved in discovering workable solutions. Adults need to model and to help children explore alternatives for solving conflicts, not to remove the conflict. Removing the contested toy does not give the child clues for resolving future problems, but makes losers out of both parties, when, in fact, both could have come out of the situation feeling positive about the results. It stands to reason that children will be better able to deal with conflicts positively as they grow older if they have worked on such skills as listening and cooperation and have developed a positive feeling about themselves.

The development of positive interactions with others is fostered as parents and teachers:

- accept differences in children
- look for causes behind conflicts
- model appropriate behavior with children, colleagues, and parents
- provide opportunities for cooperative play
- provide situations in which listening to others is supported
- create times for cooperative group activities and sharing
- provide activities which help develop self-esteem
- encourage children to express thoughts and feelings
- assist children in identifying and choosing alternative responses to conflict in everyday situations and in stories heard and told

The development of positive interactions with others is hampered as parents and teachers:

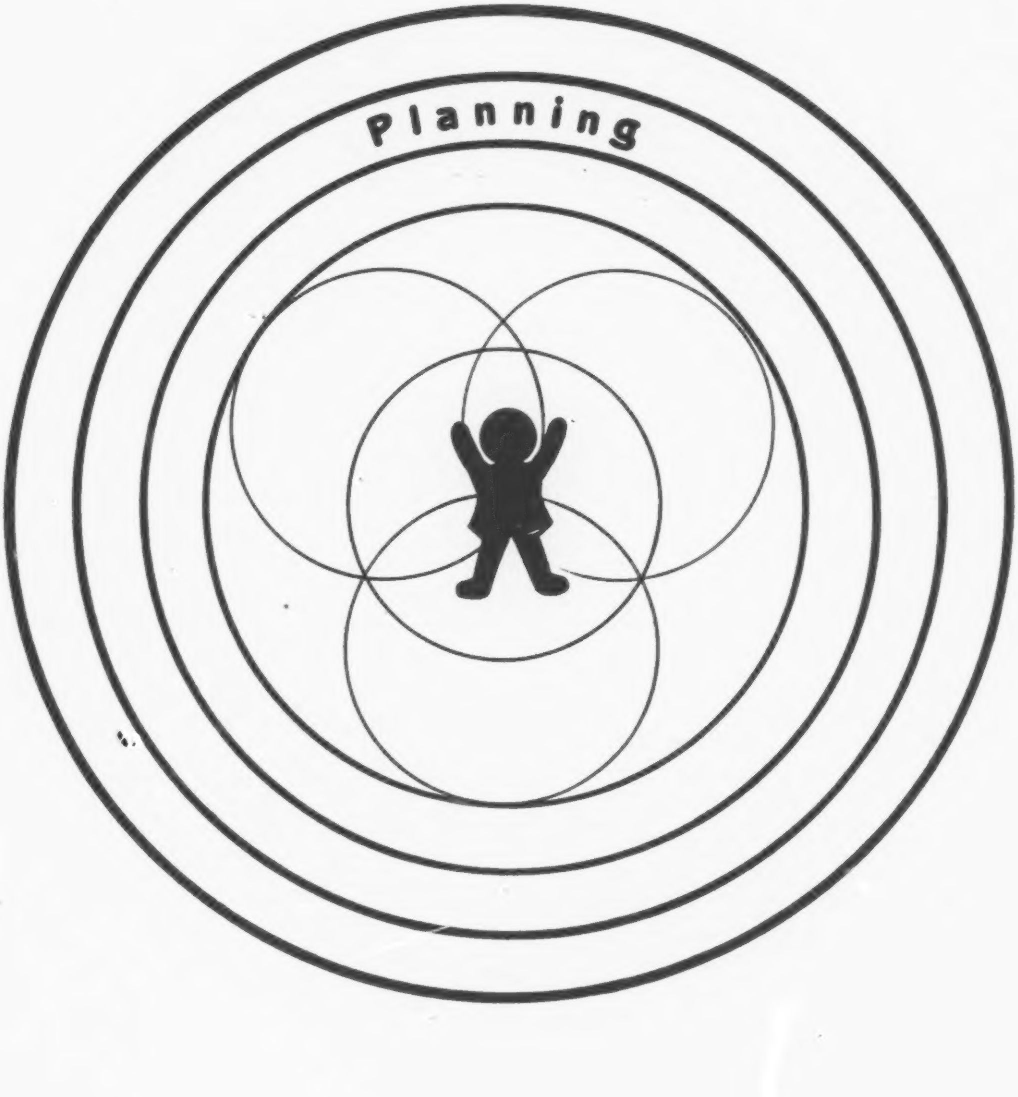
- expect children to reason as adults

- expect children to verbalize terms they don't understand
- always take away the source of the conflict
- do not listen to/talk with children and peers
- do not work through problems themselves
- use corporal punishment
- do not value children's thoughts and feelings
- criticize children
- compare children
- do not provide opportunities for conflict resolution

The development of the ability to interact positively with others may be assessed through adult observation. Adults may observe that the child:

- watches and/or participates during group singing and sharing
- begins to initiate conversations with adults and peers
- begins to display an awareness of others' feelings
- begins to play cooperatively and initiate play with peers
- begins to take turns when playing with others
- responds to requests
- begins to show tolerance of others
- listens to others
- begins to share with others
- begins to contribute willingly
- begins to identify and demonstrate more than one way to resolve a conflict, e.g., compromising, finding an adult to help, moving away

IV. Planning



PLANNING: A DESCRIPTION

Daily planning is imperative for any program for young children. Weekly plans are made, but each day alters that plan -- sometimes just a bit and other times a whole new direction is taken. The most important thing to remember about planning is that what is planned may not happen. The staff may have designed a beautiful plan for a seashell exploratory center. On Tuesday morning, however, Ricky appears with three different leaves, and the children 's attention shifts to leaves. The seashells are temporarily forgotten as the children go on a "leaf walk," noticing size, shape, odor, texture, and other characteristics. The staff has captured the moment of interest and used it to expand concept development. The next planning session focuses on various activities that might be carried out with leaves. A web is developed, and then discussion quickly shifts to three children who had been identified earlier for close observation. "James was the first to smash his leaf to see how it smelled. What other things could we bring for him to squash and smell?" "Montrose worked for a really long stretch with Michael and Andrea in the block area. It's the first time he's worked with any of the other children. They started on an airport which was mostly laid out flat on the floor, but they did place two blocks upright for the tower. Let's try asking them if they can think of a way to make a hangar." "Shanda wrote the grocery list in the housekeeping area today. Her markings have changed from repeating the same pattern to adding marks with different features. It's obvious that her writing has moved to a new stage. And it's also obvious that her writing represents groceries to be bought. This list needs to go in her folder, and let's don't forget to share it with her mother."

This planning session has focus. Specific children are discussed. What was observed? What was recorded? Where do we go from here? Specific goals were also a point of focus. The children had been observed for growth in block play, for social interaction, and for growth in perception of writing.

It is decided that one staff member will continue to observe the same three children the next day while another staff person will observe three different children. Even though it is not always possible to hold to pre-established points of focus, the identification of focus points increases the likelihood of productive planning sessions. The typical planning session should include:

- flow of the day (What went well and what didn't?)

- brainstorming for problem areas

- sharing of observations of particular children and discussion of implications of the observations

- identification of children to be observed and focus of observations

- activity planning

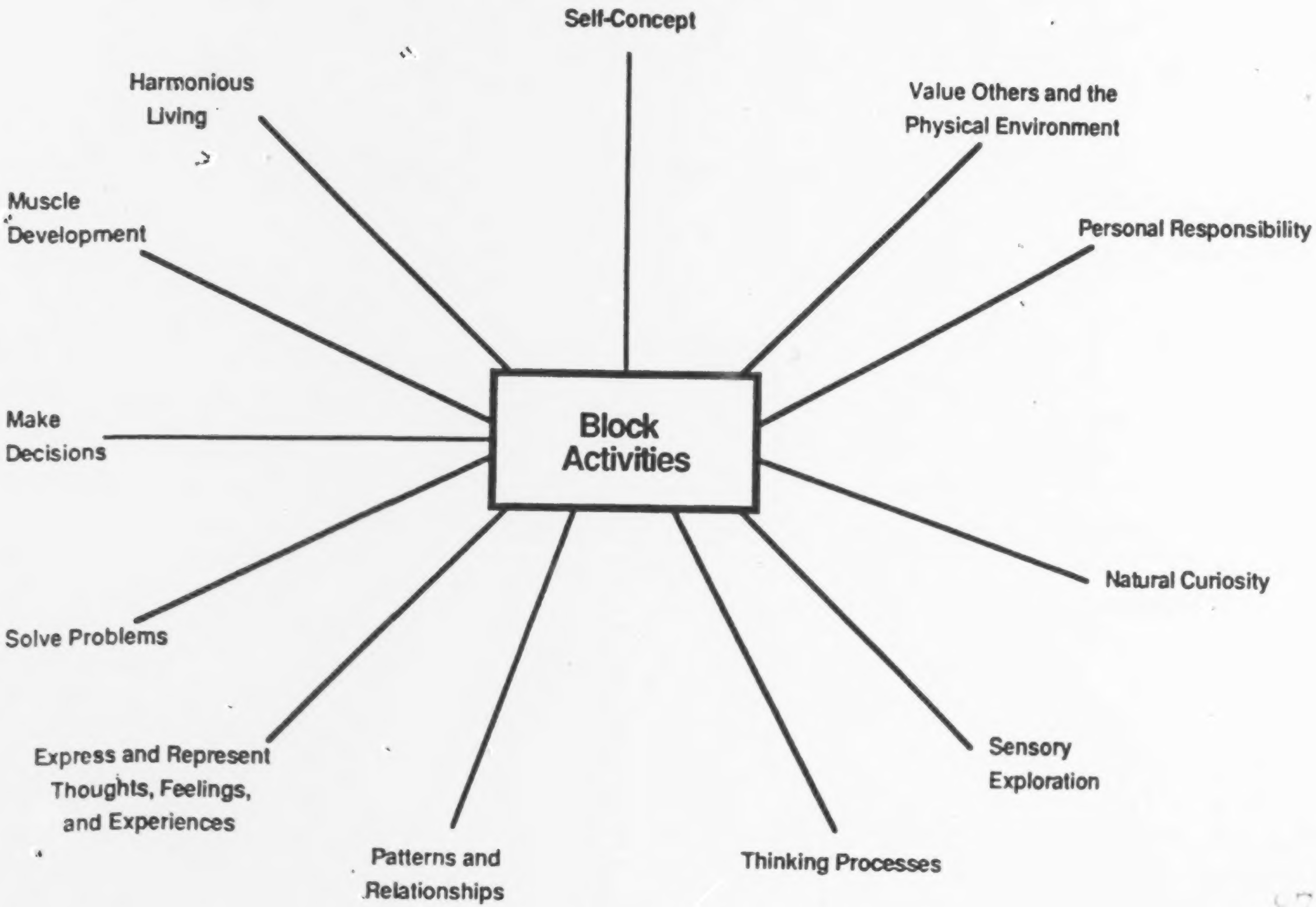
- identification and collection of needed materials

As new materials are added to the room, it is important to identify the full potential of the material. What are the many things that children can learn from working with it? What concepts can be extended? What goals can be integrated? Probably the easiest way, though certainly not the only way, for this to happen is through the process of webbing. Examples of simple webs are included, but it should be noted that no two webs will ever look exactly the same. Since brainstorming is the primary process of webbing, each team member contributes personal thoughts and ideas. After practicing a few times, webbing becomes a simple, fast way of gathering lots of ideas around a central topic. Webs can be filed for later use, but new ideas should be added to old webs. The new ideas should be drawn from experiences initiated by the children the last time the web was used. In this manner, the webs become more realistic and meaningful since they begin to reflect actual children's activity. Teachers who prefer a more linear form of planning will often use a categorized list format in the same manner.

There will be times when a full planning session is devoted to room arrangement, the daily schedule, special projects, observations of all children focused on one specific goal, observations of one single child around many goals, observation of a single child for the purpose of recording exact language or activity, planning a parent session or field trip, designing a new outdoor structure, or any number of things that crop up in the course of an early childhood year. The typical daily planning time, however, follows the previous guide and must take place at a time when all staff is present.

The following planning webs are used for illustration purposes and to demonstrate the multiple uses of this easy and effective planning strategy.

Example of a web focused on curriculum goals:



Block Activities

Self-Concept

Value Others and the Physical Environment

Personal Responsibility

Natural Curiosity

Sensory Exploration

Thinking Processes

Patterns and Relationships

Express and Represent Thoughts, Feelings, and Experiences

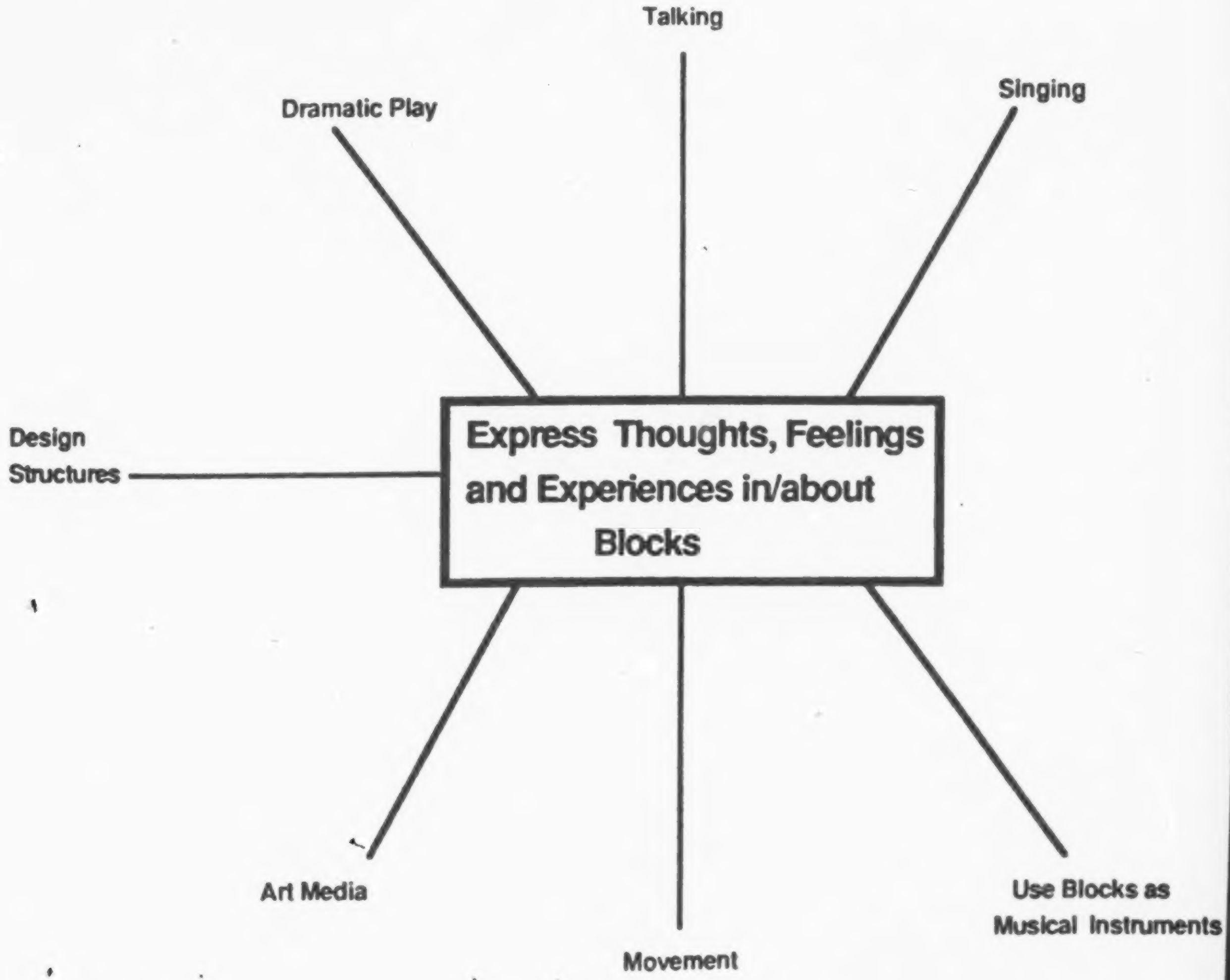
Solve Problems

Make Decisions

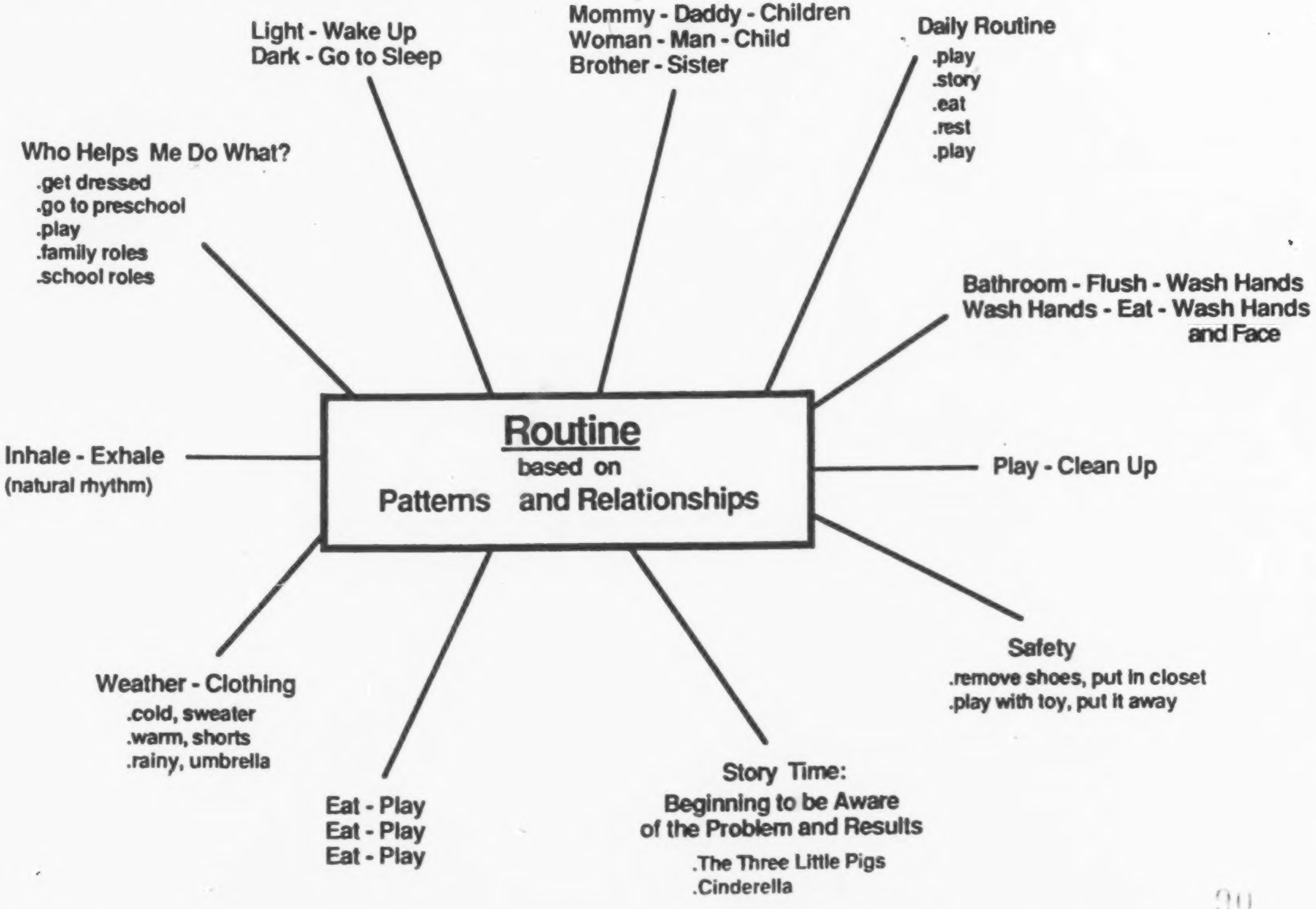
Muscle Development

Harmonious Living

Example of a web focused on one goal:


Talking
Dramatic Play
Singing
Design Structures
Express Thoughts, Feelings and Experiences in/about Blocks
Art Media
Movement
Use Blocks as Musical Instruments

Example of a one goal web:



Routine
based on
Patterns and Relationships

Light - Wake Up
Dark - Go to Sleep

Mommy - Daddy - Children
Woman - Man - Child
Brother - Sister

Daily Routine
- .play
- .story
- .eat
- .rest
- .play

Who Helps Me Do What?
- .get dressed
- .go to preschool
- .play
- .family roles
- .school roles

Bathroom - Flush - Wash Hands
Wash Hands - Eat - Wash Hands and Face

Inhale - Exhale
(natural rhythm)

Play - Clean Up

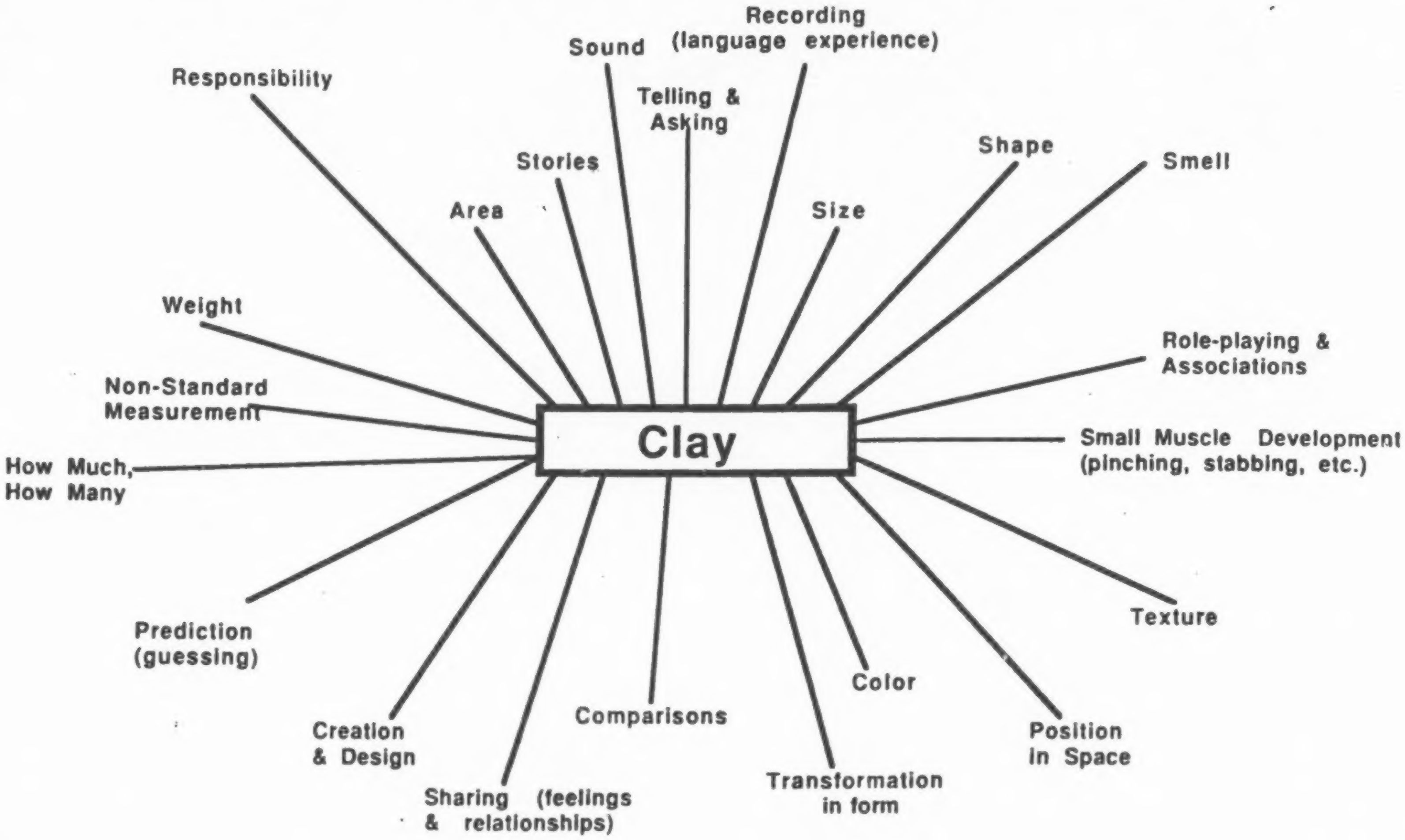
Weather - Clothing
- .cold, sweater
- .warm, shorts
- .rainy, umbrella

Safety
- .remove shoes, put in closet
- .play with toy, put it away

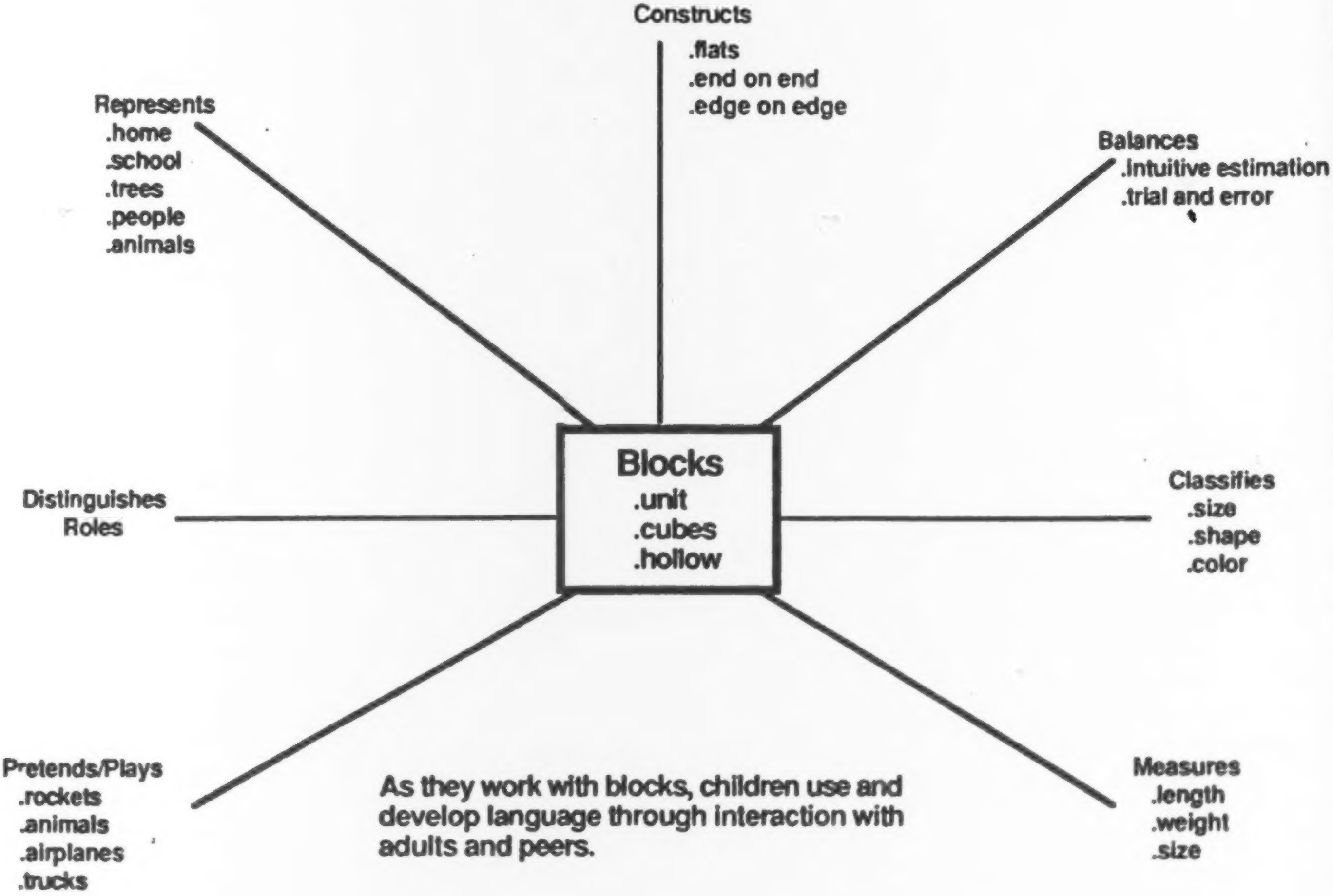
Eat - Play
Eat - Play
Eat - Play

Story Time:
Beginning to be Aware
of the Problem and Results
- .The Three Little Pigs
- .Cinderella

Example of a single material web:


Clay
Recording (language experience)
Sound
Telling & Asking
Responsibility
Stories
Area
Size
Shape
Smell
Weight
Role-playing & Associations
Non-Standard Measurement
Small Muscle Development (pinching, stabbing, etc.)
How Much, How Many
Texture
Prediction (guessing)
Color
Creation & Design
Comparisons
Position in Space
Transformation in form
Sharing (feelings & relationships)

Example of a web focused on one center:



Blocks
- .unit
- .cubes
- .hollow

Constructs
- .flats
- .end on end
- .edge on edge

Represents
- .home
- .school
- .trees
- .people
- .animals

Balances
- .intuitive estimation
- .trial and error

Distinguishes Roles

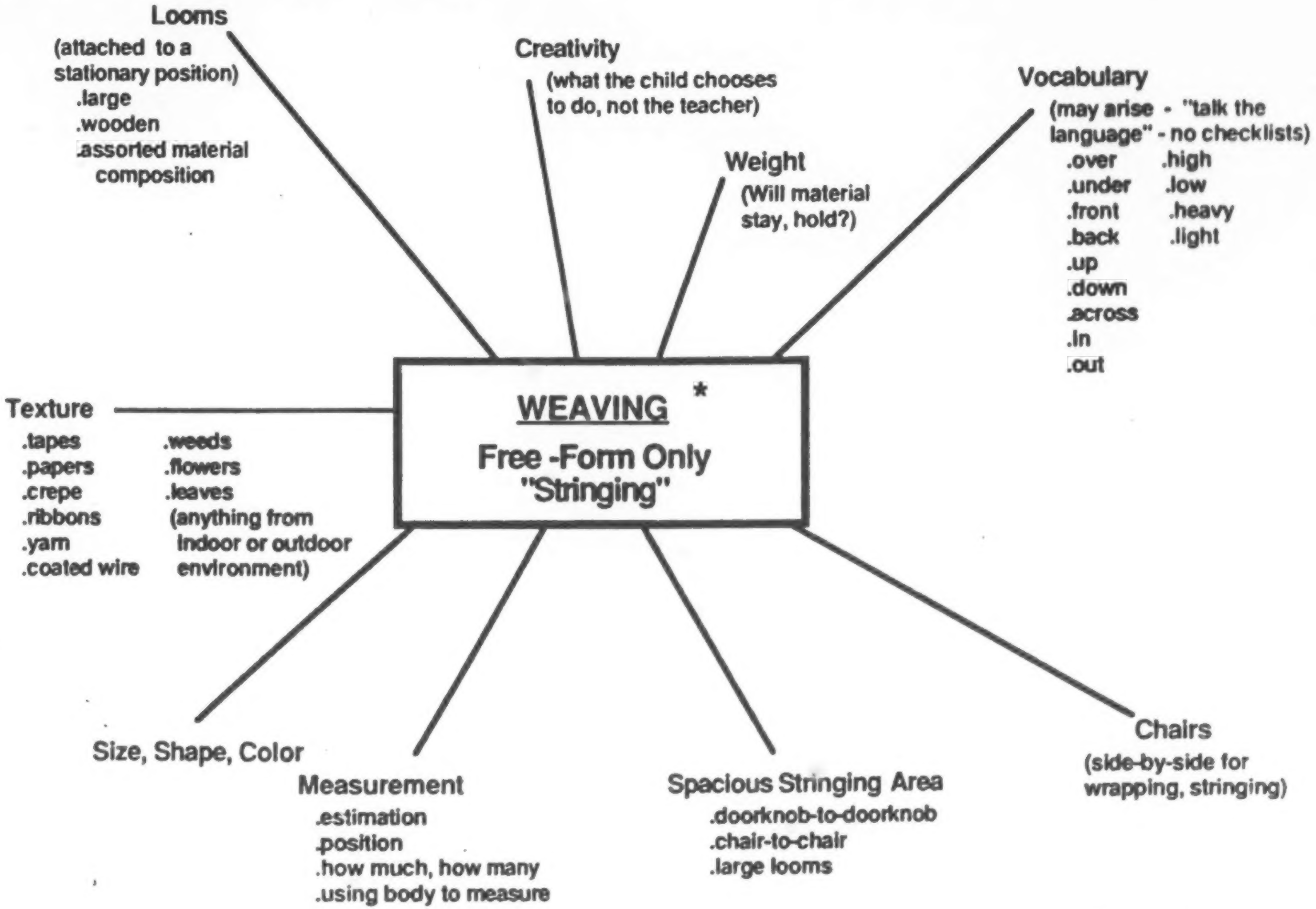
Classifies
- .size
- .shape
- .color

Pretends/Plays
- .rockets
- .animals
- .airplanes
- .trucks

Measures
- .length
- .weight
- .size

As they work with blocks, children use and develop language through interaction with adults and peers.

Example of a one center web:



WEAVING *

Free -Form Only
"Stringing"

Looms
(attached to a stationary position)
.large
.wooden
.assorted material composition

Creativity
(what the child chooses to do, not the teacher)

Weight
(Will material stay, hold?)

Vocabulary
(may arise - "talk the language" - no checklists)
.over
.under
.front
.back
.up
.down
.across
.in
.out
.high
.low
.heavy
.light

Texture
.tapes
.papers
.crepe
.ribbons
.yarn
.coated wire
.weeds
.flowers
.leaves
(anything from indoor or outdoor environment)

Size, Shape, Color

Measurement
.estimation
.position
.how much, how many
.using body to measure

Spacious Stringing Area
.doorknob-to-doorknob
.chair-to-chair
.large looms

Chairs
(side-by-side for wrapping, stringing)

* Pre-Schoolers do not have the motor skill development for "real" weaving. They should be "stringing" and taping and other free-form activities.

Example of a concept web:

CONCEPTS:

"rough" and "smooth"

Food

.cereal, pudding
.noodles - raw and cooked
.egg, uncooked - toast
.apple, cracker
.pineapple, coconut

Home

.spoons, hairbrushes
.carpet and linoleum
.glass and bricks
.bar soap, powdered soap
.baskets, pots
.paper napkins, vinyl placemats
.ropes, yarns, ribbons
.fabrics (corduroy, satin...)
.shoes

School

.playground equipment (slide, tunnel, tires)
.bus headlights, mirrors
.asphalt
.sandbox
.dirt
.tabletops
.wall finishes (plaster, wood...)
.doorknobs
.faucets

Body

.goose bumps
.calloused feet
.chapped lips, hands
.inner and outer elbow
.barefoot
.hair textures
.toe-, fingernails
.baby skin / adult skin

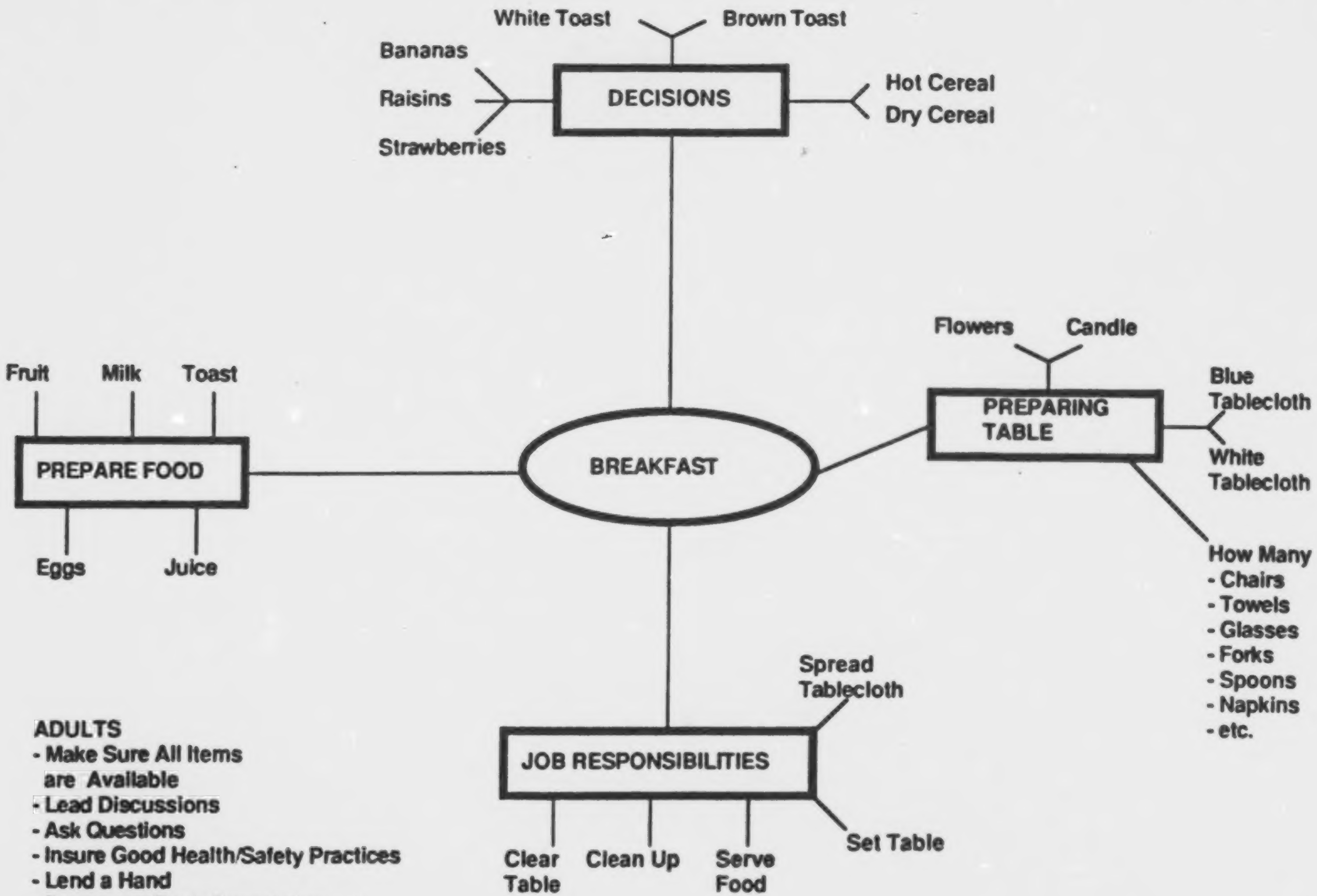
Animals

.cats and dogs
.turtle
.furs
.porcupine quills
.tongues
.claws
.bottom of dog's paw

Nature

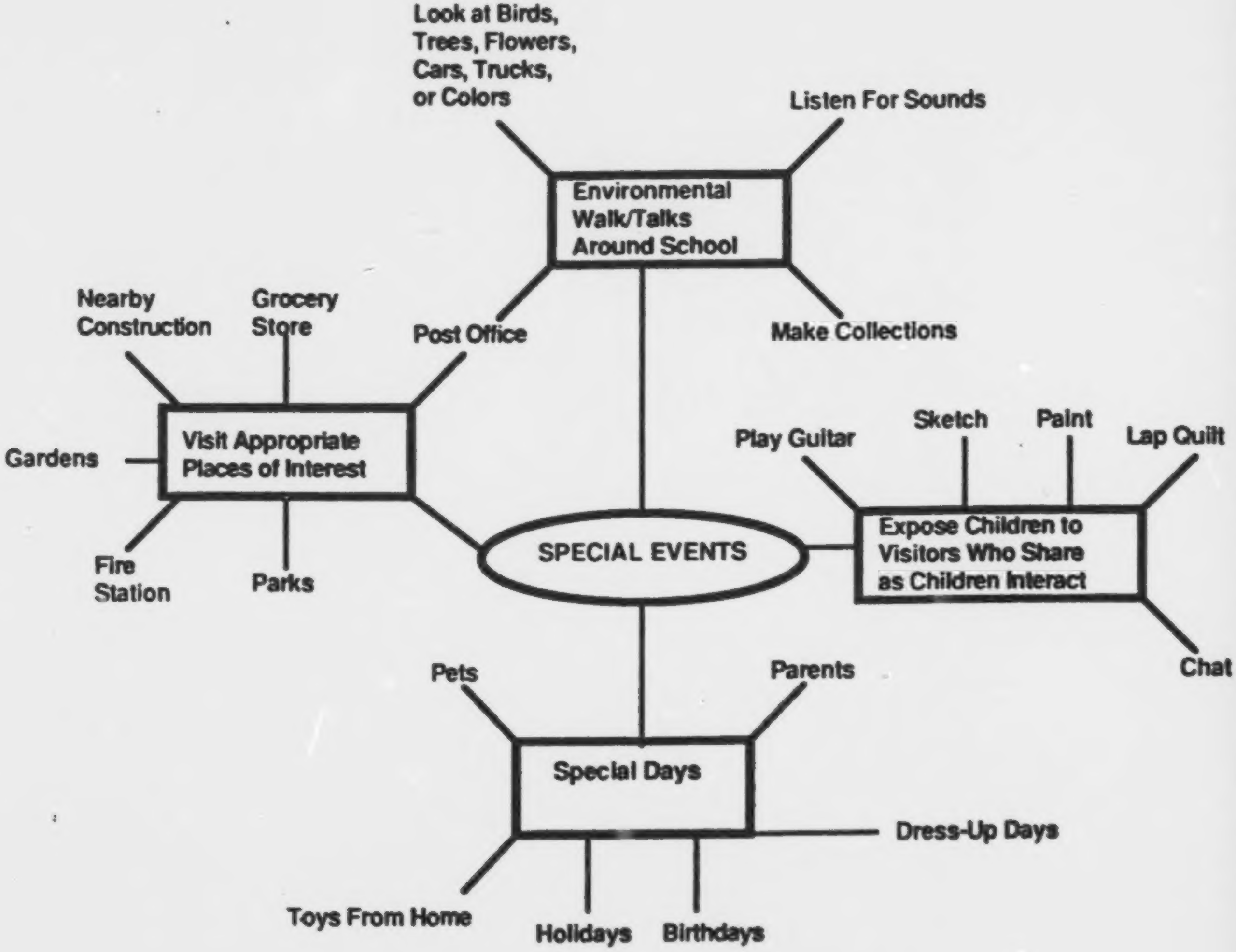
.smooth and rough pebbles
.various nuts
.sticks
.barks
.leaves
.rose petals
.worms
.caterpillars
.walking barefoot

Example of a single activity web:

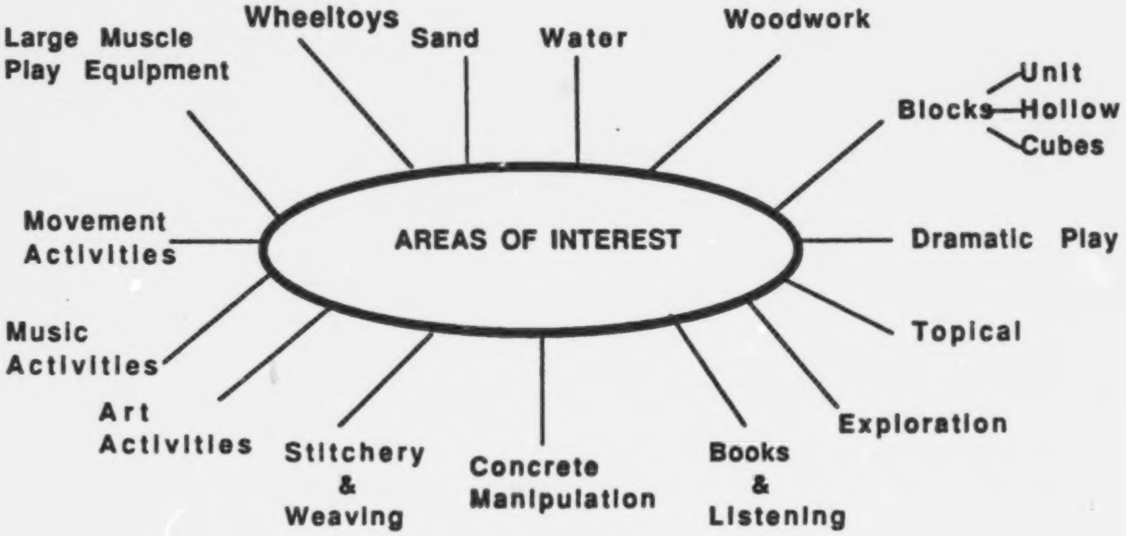

White Toast
Brown Toast
Bananas
Raisins
Strawberries
DECISIONS
Hot Cereal
Dry Cereal
Flowers
Candle
Fruit
Milk
Toast
PREPARE FOOD
Eggs
Juice
BREAKFAST
PREPARING TABLE
Blue Tablecloth
White Tablecloth
How Many
- Chairs
- Towels
- Glasses
- Forks
- Spoons
- Napkins
- etc.
Spread Tablecloth
JOB RESPONSIBILITIES
Clear Table
Clean Up
Serve Food
Set Table

ADULTS
- Make Sure All Items are Available
- Lead Discussions
- Ask Questions
- Insure Good Health/Safety Practices
- Lend a Hand
- Encourage Task Completion
- Debrief
- Model Positive Interactions

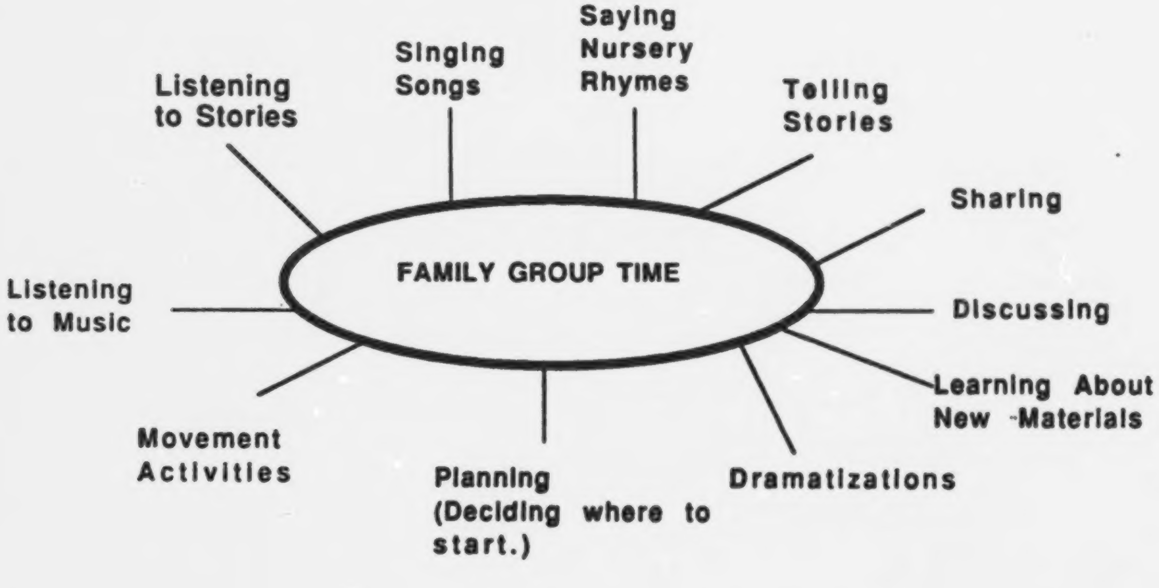
Example of a special events web:


Look at Birds,
Trees, Flowers,
Cars, Trucks,
or Colors
Listen For Sounds
Environmental Walk/Talks Around School
Nearby Construction
Grocery Store
Post Office
Make Collections
Gardens
Visit Appropriate Places of Interest
Play Guitar
Sketch
Paint
Lap Quilt
Fire Station
Parks
SPECIAL EVENTS
Expose Children to Visitors Who Share as Children Interact
Chat
Pets
Parents
Special Days
Dress-Up Days
Toys From Home
Holidays
Birthdays

Example of a classroom centers web:


Large Muscle Play Equipment
Wheeltoys
Sand
Water
Woodwork
Blocks
Unit
Hollow
Cubes
AREAS OF INTEREST
Movement Activities
Dramatic Play
Music Activities
Topical
Art Activities
Exploration
Stitchery & Weaving
Concrete Manipulation
Books & Listening

Example of a web for sharing time:


Listening to Stories
Singing Songs
Saying Nursery Rhymes
Telling Stories
Sharing
FAMILY GROUP TIME
Listening to Music
Discussing
Learning About New Materials
Movement Activities
Planning (Deciding where to start.)
Dramatizations

The Child's Day

No single schedule works for all programs; however, certain broad guidelines must be built into any schedule for young children. The schedule should reflect a typical day at home. Children should assist in all phases of meal and snack time. Large blocks of play/work time are essential with short group sharing times built in. A quiet time after lunch is necessary. There should be time for listening to stories, time for singing, time for movement activities. The day should not be hurried and few, if any, external schedules should be allowed.

8:00 - 8:30	Arrival and Welcome (Warm greeting, chatting, good-bye to parents) Preparing, eating, and cleaning up after breakfast. Selecting and becoming involved in an area of interest inside.
8:30 - 11:30	(9:00 - 10:00 snacks available) Family group time (sharing, discussing new materials, group activities) Continuing choice of and involvement in areas of interest inside and outside. Nap time for individuals who need it Special event(s) Preparing lunch
11:30 - 1:30	Eating and cleaning up after lunch Quiet time for napping for those who need it (Throughout the day a quiet area with a mat or a cot should be provided for any child who needs it. However, after lunch a time for quiet activities and and an opportunity for all to rest on mats should be provided.)
1:30 - 6:00	(2:30 - 3:30 snacks available) Family group time (sharing activities of the day, group activities, planning) Continuing choice of and involvement in area of interest inside and outside Special event(s) Preparing to go home, saying good-byes, and departure

V. Assessing

- Assessing Children's Growth
- Assessing Teachers
- Assessing The Home/School Partnership
- Checklist of Materials for the Environment

ASSESSMENT

Looking closely at children is the focus of all effective assessment programs for young children and their teachers. To facilitate understanding of the nature of children and planning for their individual needs, responsible adults observe, interact, and record daily. They look at specific behaviors in many situations to see where each child is in relation to the curriculum goals. Parents and teachers need a firm foundation in child growth and development -- social, emotional, physical, and intellectual -- in order to interpret and use what they see.

To maintain a program for young children which enhances their growth, adults carry out an on-going assessment of the basic and ever-changing learning environment to insure availability of child centered materials and activities. Adult knowledge of characteristics and potential uses of materials and surrounding environments is vital to meeting children's needs.

Assessment would not be complete without evaluating the effectiveness of the home-school partnership. Parents and teachers share responsibility for insuring the best possible lives for children and their families, collaborating to meet needs of all concerned at home and at school.

Looking at Children

In Observing and Recording the Behavior of Young Children, Dorothy Cohen and Virginia Stern suggest that children give messages constantly and that parents and teachers must learn to see children as they see themselves.

> Children communicate with us through their eyes, the quality of their voices, their body postures, their gestures, their mannerisms, their smiles, their jumping up and down, their listlessness. They show us, by the way they do things as well as by what they do, what is going on inside them. When we have come to see children's behavior through the eyes of its meaning to them, from the inside out, we shall be well on our way to understanding them.

Means by which adults may receive clues to understanding and perceiving needs of children are:

- observing the child closely during various activities
- working alone and with others
- talking personally with the child
- keeping anecdotal records

Situations in which a child should be observed include

- routines: arriving, learning, eating, dressing, toileting, resting
- use of materials/equipment
- interaction with one another
- behavior with adults
- group activities

Adults can train themselves to be observers and recorders as they share the responsibility. Three adults working with sixteen children could initially plan in such a way as to focus on three children each on the first day and three additional ones the next day. Sometime during the day the staff discusses their observations and makes plans based upon them. As they become proficient they will be able to see and record more and will be able to perceive patterns of behavior, thinking processes, and skill development of individual children.

As adults record observation, attention should be given to the stimulus for, setting of, and child's response to the activity. For example, in looking at and recording a child's use of materials (painting at the easel) the following questions may be reminders of things to be aware of:

Setting: Are all colors available? Is more than one brush? paper? Who else is in the area? children? adults?

Stimulus: How did the child come to the material? self-initiated? adult-initiated? imitating another child? asked by another child?

Reaction: Does the child

- use several colors? mix colors (in jars or on paper)?
- control drips? try to? deliberately?
- cover the paper? confine self to a small spot?
- make forms? (vertical/horizontal lines, curves, dots, blotches, letters, numbers)
- paint over forms?
- use one or more brush strokes? (scrubbing, dotting, gliding,)
- do a number of paintings? paint quickly? work for a long time on one?
- name the painting?
- talk to self? others? make other sounds? ask for help/approval? (quality of voice)
- move the body as painting? (straight, slow jerky, easy, vigorous, free-flowing)
- change facial expression? (eyes -- dull, bright, teary, blinking, etc., mouth -- grin, quiver, pucker, smile)

The kind of language used by adults in recording helps others see the child clearly. For example, instead of

- run use dart, bolt, dash
- say use whisper, shout, whine
- cry use wail, whimper, weep
- happy use jubilant, bouncy, sparkling
- sad use wistful, downcast, sullen

Also, tell how a child moves; jauntily, heavily, scuffing toes, swinging arms, head to the sky.

(From Cohen and Stern, Observing & Recording the Behavior of Young Children, p. 30)

Four-year-old Leo at the paints:

Leo wanders into the art center, pausing at the door to watch Polly, who is painting at the easel, and Mary and Ellen who are drawing with chalk.

"Guess I'll paint, O.K.?"

Without awaiting an answer, Leo carefully lifts smock from hook, carries it, bundled in his arms, to teacher. "Mrs. S., put this on me?" Teacher helps him into smock and he bounces over to easel next to Polly. Looks into jars on her easel, looks at colors in his jars.

"I have red. And yellow too."

Picks up a brush in each hand, hands rotate in opposite directions. Stops, still holding brushes aloft. Looks at paper and smiles. "That's the way spiders are made. Spiders are nice. When I was a snake I was friendly with them and I liked it."

Dips brushes into paint and resumes swirling motions, dripping paints with gay abandon.

"I don't like to wipe on the end of jars. I just do it this way. Don't you think I'm covering this whole paper up? I am."

Dips brushes again. "There's hard painting at the bottom, Teacher." (sediment) Inspects tips of brushes and paints drip off onto the floor. Looks at teacher, frowning and worried looking. "It's all right if paint gets on the paper, isn't it?" Waits, brushes held over tray, for reply.

When reassured, he makes a few tentative jabs at the paper with the brushes.

"That's all for me." Replaces brushes carefully in correct colors, unbuttons smock slowly, and strips it off, dropping it to floor.

"I'll save my brushes till tomorrow, right?" Strolls out to sink, rolling up sleeves as he goes.

Observations such as the one above may be kept in a notebook or in a card file and used as reference as parents, teacher, and assistant talk about and plan for children. As each child is observed over a period of time, working in various situations and using many different materials and pieces of equipment, patterns of behavior may be indicated and recorded as a part of a year-end report. Such summary would include information concerning social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development -- all gleaned from samples of work and recordings of children's behavior throughout the year.

ASSESSING CHILDREN'S GROWTH

ASSESSING CHILDREN'S GROWTH

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
I. Self Worth	• smiles frequently • explores the environment with confidence • makes decisions • talks with adults and peers about activities • tries again when mistakes are made • expresses and accepts affection • works cooperatively with one or two children for short periods of time • accepts responsibility			

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
II. Value and respect of the environment, for self and others	• takes turns • aware of others feelings • responds to requests • begins to show tolerance of others • listens to others • chooses playmates • begins to share with others • enjoys participation in group discussions and activities • begins to show self-control when interacting with others • demonstrates good health habits • demonstrates self-help skills • helps in efforts to clean and maintain the classroom, outside environment and the home • brings in items of nature to share • talks about the natural world • enjoys caring for plants and animals			

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
III. Expands curiosity through use of all the senses	• Asks questions • Explores the natural and physical environment • talks about experiences • tests limits • enjoys books • expresses surprise, wonder and excitement in new activities • uses all the senses			
IV. Patterns and Relationships	• Begins to observe and make simple comparisons • Begins to draw, paint and talk about family members • Begins to verbalize own actions • Begins to describe objects using the senses • Begins to distinguish one animal from another, things that sink/float, loud/soft etc. • indicate a notion of where things belong • responds to music with whole body • sorts • patterns • makes comparison leading to seriation			

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
IV. Patterns and Relationships (cont.)	• demonstrates beginning concept of number • demonstrates non-standard measuring • beginning understanding of spatial relations • beginning to verbalize relations and transformations			
V. Express and Represent thoughts, feelings, and experiences	• oral language stages social stages: - egocentric talk - associative talk - collaborative talk involving concrete thought structural stages: - telegraphic speech - structural omissions - structural explorations Functions - basic needs - directs & persuades - reports - questions - predicts - imagines - solves problems - plans - tells stories - relationship maintenance			

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
V. Express and represent thoughts. feelings and experiences (cont.)	• Artistic Expression Stages - random scribbles - longitudiual and circular scribbles - naming - floating figures - base line			
	• Use of Media - explores variety of media - uses media to solve problems - uses media in non-traditional ways - uses media to express emotions			
	• Perception of Writing - same mark over & over - different marks - special marks - marks stand for something - same letter in different ways - words stand for something - linearity and directionality			
	• Art Forms - enjoys music - explores voice & instruments to create sound - uses objects which become people, animals and other things - explores capabilities and limitations of own body - uses body for solving problems, expressing thoughts & feelings and for discovering new concepts - engages in "becoming" experiences			

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
VI. Ability to make decisions and to solve problems	• Chooses games & materials, books, art materials • chooses a partner • decides what to build • chooses between wagon and tricycle • chooses between milk and juice • uses trial and error method • sorts and matches objects by size, color, texture or shape • returns objects to storage unit by matching outline • seeks help for things unable to do alone • explains how an activity is done • begins to work through personal problems			
VII. Develop appropriate thinking processes in relation to the immediate and personal environment	• makes statements, asks questions, • changes strategies • performs physical acts to solve problems • reveals how he/she is bound by perception • uses materials in orginial, imaginative ways • believes what he/she sees even when evidence is presented to the contrary			

GOAL	INDICATORS	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
		Dates	Notes	
VIII. Develop and expand capacity to use large and small muscles in immediate and personal environment	• Uses a variety of materials & equipment • Tries out new movements, using whole body • moves in many different directions • uses small muscles in painting, drawing, using manipulatives			
IX. Develop and expand in ability to live in harmony with others	• participates in group activities • plays cooperatively, takes turns, shares • shows tolerance of others and is aware of their feelings • responds to requests and contributes willingly • listens to others • identifies and demonstrates ways to resolve a conflict			

Name ______________________

Assessing Children's Growth

(Individual Record)

GOAL	OBSERVATION Dates Notes	ACTION/PLAN
I. Self Worth		
II. Value and respect of the environment, for self and others		
III. Expands curiosity through use of all the senses		
IV. Patterns and Relationships		
V. Express and represent thoughts, feelings, and experiences		

Name ______________________

Assessing Children's Growth

(Individual Record)

GOAL	OBSERVATION		ACTION/PLAN
	Dates	Notes	
VI. Ability to make decisions and to solve problems			
VII. Develop appropriate thinking processes in relation to the immediate and personal environment			
VIII. Develop and expand capacity to use large and small muscles in immediate and personal environment			
IX. Develop and expand in ability to live in harmony with others			

Dates ____________ to __________

ASSESSING CHILDREN'S GROWTH
(Class Record)

Names	Goal I	Goal II	Goal III	Goal IV	Goal V	Goal VI	Goal VII	Goal VIII	Goal IX

Dates ____________ to ____________

ASSESSING CHILDREN'S GROWTH
(Class Record)

Names	Goal I	Goal II	Goal III	Goal IV	Goal V	Goal VI	Goal VII	Goal VIII	Goal IX

TEACHER ASSESSMENT

NOTE:

The Pre-K-Kindergarten Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument is currently under consideration by the State Board of Education. It will be mailed to you upon completion and approval and should be inserted behind the page which reads "Teacher Assessment."

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

A. Cooking	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
1. Refrigerator				
2. Stove				
3. Freezer				
4. Work table (child height)				
5. Dishwasher				
6. Washer and dryer				
7. Pots and pans				
8. Cooking utensils				
9. Measuring instruments				
10. Sifters				
11. Graters				
12. Electric mixer				
13. Hand juicer				
14. Hot pads				
15. Aprons				
16. Dish towels				
17. Detergents				
18. Pitchers				
19. Serving dishes (not paper)				
20. Tablecloths (cloth)				
21. Napkins (cloth) for 25				
22. Flatware (not plastic) for 25				
23. Set of dishes (not paper) for 25				
24. Glasses for 25				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
B. Books and Listening				
1. Area carpet				
2. Armchair or sofa				
3. Pillows				
4. Low mobile unit for books				
5. Record player and headphones				
6. Records				
7. Tape recorder				
8. Tapes				
9. Typewriter				
10. Printing set				
11. Bookmaking materials				
12. Books of all kind				
13. Paper, pencils, crayons, chalk, magic markers				
C. Exploratory/Manipulative/Table Activities				
1. Storage units for manipulatives				
2. Balance scales				
3. Weights				
4. Assorted materials for weighting (beans, rocks, etc.)				
5. Domestic scales				
6. Spring balance				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

C. Exploratory/Manipulative/Table Activities (Cont.)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
7. Bathroom scales				
8. Objects for counting				
9. Sticks, rope, yarn, string, ribbons for measuring				
10. Timers				
11. Clock - real and play				
12. Measuring utensils (cups, jugs, spoons)				
13. Funnels, tubes, cans, sieves, buckets				
14. Attribute blocks				
15. Colored cubes				
16. Chips, dice				
17. Pattern pieces				
18. Dominoes				
19. Table blocks				
20. Puzzles/puzzle rack				
21. Matching games				
22. Playing cards				
23. Burlap, large eyed needles, yarn				
24. Dressing games				
25. Lotto games				
26. Pegboards and pegs				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

C. Exploratory/Manipulative/Table Activities (Cont.)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
27. Nesting toys				
28. Wooden beads (large and small)				
29. Abacus/counting frame				
30. Flannel-board felt shapes, etc.				
31. Simple machines				
32. Rocks and seashells				
33. Animals: frogs, turtles, guinea pigs, etc.				
34. Work table				
35. Display table				
36. Aquarium				
37. Terrarium				
38. Plants, pots, seeds				
39. Large and small magnifying glasses				
40. Mirrors				
41. Prisms				
42. Assorted magnets				
43. Assorted materials for use with magnets				
44. Old clocks, pulleys, screwdrivers				
45. Compass				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

C. Exploratory/Manipulative/Table Activities (Cont.)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
46. Materials for observation, exploration, experimentation, collection				
47. Garden plot				
48. Garden tools, seeds, and plants				
D. Visual Arts 1. Easels (double-sided)				
2. Tables				
3. Large air-tight bin for clay				
4. Clay and play dough				
5. Storage unit				
6. Paints (powder, finger, water colors)				
7. Printing materials				
8. Collage materials				
9. Paint brushes				
10. Collections of magazines, newspapers, wallpaper books, junk materials				
11. Materials for constructing instruments				
12. Crayons				
13. Glue/paste				
14. Scissors				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

D. Visual Arts (Cont.)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
15. Yarn				
16. Drawing/construction paper				
17. Aprons/smocks				
18. Magic markers, pens, pencils				
19. Stitchery materials				
E. Dramatic Play				
1. Doll beds and dolls				
2. Play furniture				
3. Rack for dress-up clothes				
4. Dress-up clothes: (male and female) or box of fabric scraps				
5. Long mirror				
6. Old telephone and directory				
7. Dishes, pots, pans				
8. Hair curlers, brushes, combs, ribbons hand mirrors				
9. Table and chairs				
10. Store front/Puppet stage				
11. Empty food cans/containers, cash register, real money				
12. Calendar, magazines, newspapers, etc.				
13. Doctor/nurse kits				
14. Hair dryer				
15. Puppets				
16. Other props as needed				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

F. Blocks	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
1. Storage unit for blocks				
2. Blocks (unit and large hollow)				
3. Construction sets: Lego, etc.				
4. Small cars, trains, trucks, airplanes				
5. Sets of community people				
6. Sets of landscape pieces				
7. Boxes, boards, barrels, spools				
8. Five-gallon ice cream containers and big milk cartons				
G. Music and Movement				
1. Large carpeted area				
2. Record player and records				
3. Cassette recorder/cassettes				
4. Rhythm instruments				
5. Home-made instruments				
6. Jump ropes and hula hoops				
7. Scarves				
8. Large balls				
9. Tumbling mats				
10. Parachute				
11. Tone bells				
12. Piano/auto harp/guitar/recorder				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

H. Topical Center (for unit/special focus activities)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
1. Concrete objects				
2. Pictures				
3. Non-standard measuring materials (ribbons, popsicle sticks, etc.)				
4. Balance scales				
5. Books				
6. Display of children's artwork related to topic				
7. Labels				
I. Sand and Water (inside and outside)				
1. Sand table/tray/box				
2. Dry, damp, coarse sand				
3. Small cars, trucks, highway signs, community people, landscape pieces, construction equipment				
4. Transparent water tray/tub				
5. Water				
6. Sand/water wheels				
7. Liquid detergent for bubble making				
8. Soap for washing				
9. Straws, strings, funnels, sponges, corks				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

I. Sand and Water (inside and outside) (Cont.)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
10. Boats, egg beaters, cups				
11. Tempera paint/food coloring				
12. Coffee pot				
13. Doll clothes				
14. Squirt bottles				
15. Variety of containers of differing sizes				
J. Woodworking/Carpentry (inside and outside)				
1. Work bench				
2. Tool rack				
3. Vise, wrench, pliers				
4. Saws, hammers, hand drills, screwdrivers				
5. Sandpaper				
6. Soft and hard woods				
7. Nails, nuts, bolts of various sizes				
8. Log for hammering nails into				
9. Paint (tempera or poster)				
10. Paint brushes				
11. Rulers				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

K. Outside Area	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
1. Traffic signs				
2. Variety of wheel toys (wagons, tricycles, etc.)				
3. Large hollow blocks				
4. Large balls				
5. Ropes				
6. Climbing rope apparatus				
7. Other climbing structures (jungle gym, ladders, etc.)				
8. Wide slide				
9. Platforms				
10. Multi-level play surface (some hills and valleys)				
11. Playhouse				
12. Tires				
13. Push and pull toys				
14. Barrels for climbing through and rolling over				
15. Balance beams (varying widths)				
16. Wading pool				
17. Woodworking				

TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT

K. Outside Area (Cont.)	Present	Not Present	Action Plan for Acquiring Material/Equipment	Date to be Accomplished
18. Sand and water play				
19. Low seesaws				
20. Scooters				

ASSESSING THE HOME/ SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The Home-School Partnership

Providing the best possible world for children is a responsibility which is shared by home and school. How well the school provides leadership in and opportunities for fulfilling this commitment is of primary importance. The following checklist will be an aid in evaluating how well the school is achieving this goal.

I. Sample Recording Form

			No. of Families Contacted in this Manner					Notes
Sharing Information								
1. Information is shared between home and school in the following ways								
A. Individual parent conferences								
B. School-level parent meetings								
C. Telephone Calls								
D. Home visits								
E. Mini-conferences when child is dropped off or picked up								
F. Notes								
G. Newsletters								
H. Program-wide parent meetings								
I. Notices on available learning experiences for adults								
J. Notices on available resources, community agencies, etc.								

	Yes	Frequency	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	No	Notes
2. The following information and issues are discussed with individual parents								
A. A statement in plain language about the child's level of functioning								
B. The learning goals (long-range and short-range) for their child								
C. The specific classroom strategies used to realize these goals								
D. The approximate timeline in which these goals will be achieved and progress reassessed								
E. The parent's view of the child's level of development								
F. The parent's view of appropriate goals and strategies for the child								
G. Activities the parents can implement to achieve desired goals								
H. Assessment of progress made toward specified goals and setting of new goals								

	Yes	Frequency	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	No	Notes
3. The following information is shared with all the parents								
A. The general goals and curriculum for the children								
B. The general progress children are making toward the goals								
C. Specific activities implemented to achieve particular goals								
D. Assessment procedures used in the classroom								
4. The following information is sought from parents								
A. Ways in which the program can be made more appropriate to the culture and lifestyle of the children								
B. Assessment of what the children are learning								
C. Parents' goals for children								
D. Parents' view of the appropriateness of the curriculum for their children in terms of parents' objectives								
E. The types of parent involvement activities in which they would like to participate								
F. The effectiveness of the parent involvement activities in which they participate								

	Yes	Frequency	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	No	Notes
Classroom Activities								
5. Parents visit in the classroom at their convenience								
6. Parents accompany children on field trips								
7. Parents regularly work in the center as volunteers or assistants								
8. Parents occasionally work in the center as volunteers or teaching assistants								
9. Parents volunteer their help in other aspects of the preschool program (List different roles parents perform.)								
Parent Meetings								
10. Regular meetings are held with parents to help them interact more effectively with their children at home								
11. Occasional meetings are held with parents to help them interact more effectively with their children at home								
12. Discussion or study groups are held regularly to help parents acquire relevant child-rearing information on selected topics, e.g., discipline, nutrition, health, play, development								

	Yes	Frequency	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	No	Notes
Parent Meetings (cont.)								
13. Parents help to plan the activities which involve them and in which they participate								
14. Parents participate in advisory groups which consider the following.								
A. Budget								
B. Curriculum								
C. Program evaluation								
D. Personnel								
E. Support services (i.e., health services, social services, psychological services)								
F. Other (specify)								
15. Social events (breakfasts, dinners, picnics) are held for parents, children and teachers								

II. Assessment of the Home/School Partnership	Yes	Frequency	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	No	Notes
Resource Room								
16. Home-like atmosphere								
17. Divided into clearly defined areas:								
Reading (in categories)								
Films/videos								
Making games and learning materials								
Lending toy collection								
Consultation								
Phone								
HELP line								
Upcoming Activities Board								
Special interest areas								
Community Resources								
18. Workshops offered								
Child development								
Parenting								
Communicating								
19. Coffee area								
20. Recordkeeping Strategy								
21. Adult Literacy								
22. GED work								
23. Listing of Community-School opportunities								
24. Listing of High School, Community College, College, University offerings								
25. Listing of Community Resources								

III. Assessing the Home/School Partnership: A Summary
Indicate the Number of Parents, Teachers, or Others Who Have Participated in the Following Activities

	Advisory Council	Resource Center			Constructing Materials	Classroom Volunteer	Presenter	Conferences	Special Events	Toy Library
		Workshops	Consultant Services	Materials Check-out						
Parents										
Teachers										
Others										

IV. Attitude Survey Utilized:

Parents: ________________________________

Teachers: ________________________________

Results:

V. Results of Adult Literacy Component:

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PROGRAMS THAT HELPED

Designs for Change, Chicago, Illinois.
A project focused on recruitment, training, and leadership development for low-income and minority Chicago parents.

Parents as Teachers, St. Louis, Missouri.
A statewide project focused on home training which teaches parents how to facilitate the learning of their infant - 3-years-old.

Parents in Touch, Indianapolis Public Schools, Indianapolis, Indiana.
A parent/teacher communication project focused on structured conferencing strategies and parent contracts for assisting in their child's education.

School Council Assistance Project, South Carolina.
As a result of legislation in 1977 and 1984, Advisory Councils are now in every school in South Carolina. Following a state sponsored training program, council members participate in planning and directing school improvement.

Home Instruction Program for Preschoolers, Little Rock, Arkansas.
A home-based preschool education program for parents of "at risk children. Reading instruction for nonreading parents is coupled with a focus on parent as most important teacher.

Parent and Child Education, The Keenan Adult Literacy Projects, Louisville, Kentucky.
Eighteen rural projects and two urban projects in Kentucky and four projects in North Carolina focused on simultaneously providing education for parent and child.